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BATTLING FOR ATLANTA

THE YOUNG KENTUCKIANS
SERIES

GENERAL NELSON'S SCOUT
ON GENERAL THOMAS'S STAFF
BATTLING FOR ATLANTA
FROM ATLANTA TO THE SEA
RAIDING WITH MORGAN

THE YOUNG MISSOURIANS
SERIES

WITH LYON IN MISSOURI
THE SCOUT OF PEA RIDGE
THE COURIER OF THE OZARKS
STORMING VICKSBURG
THE LAST RAID

THE YOUNG VIRGINIANS
SERIES

THE BOY SCOUTS OF THE SHENAN-
DOAH
WITH THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

Illustrated, 12mo, per volume, \$1.25
A. C. McCLURG & Co., Publishers
CHICAGO

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“SEE, SEE, THERE IS ATLANTA!”

The Young Kentuckians Series

Battling for Atlanta

BY

Byron A. Dunn

Author of "General Nelson's Scout," "On General
Thomas's Staff," "From Atlanta to the
Sea," "Raiding with Morgan"

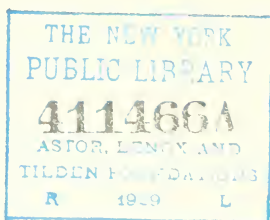
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1917

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TO
My Comrades
WHO MARCHED WITH ME FROM
CHATTANOOGA TO ATLANTA
STRUGGLING WITH A BRAVE AND GALLANT FOE
FOR EVERY FOOT OF TERRITORY
THIS VOLUME IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

INTRODUCTION.

THIS, the third volume of the Young Kentuckians Series, deals with the great campaign that resulted in the capture of Atlanta, the Gate City of the South. It was a campaign in which two hundred thousand men took part, and in which eighty thousand were placed *hors de combat*.

Those who have read the preceding volumes of the Young Kentuckians Series should bear in mind that the boys of sixteen and seventeen years of age to whom they were first introduced have been in the army between three and four years, and are now young men of nearly twenty. For that reason this volume is not so juvenile in character as the preceding ones, but Captain Shackelford is as full of youthful valor and patriotic zeal as when he served under General Nelson.

In the movements of the armies, in the important actions of the generals, and in everything characteristic of the spirit in which the war was conducted by both parties, my aim has been historical accuracy.

Fred's and Darling's flight through Georgia, pursued by fierce bloodhounds and almost as fierce a soldiery, had its counterparts in hundreds of cases.

The horrors of Andersonville are not overdrawn; in fact, no pen can depict that fearful place as it really was. Nearly fourteen thousand grassy mounds tell the pathetic story in language more eloquent than mere words.

In "Battling for Atlanta" I have endeavored to depict the sufferings and privations endured by the soldiers, especially those immured in the prison-pens of the South, and to enable the present generation to form an idea of the great price paid by their fathers for the preservation of the Union.

BYRON A. DUNN.

WAUKEGAN, ILL., June, 1900.

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BATTLING FOR ATLANTA.

CHAPTER I.

ROCKY FACE RIDGE.

TWENTY-FIVE miles southeast of Chattanooga, Tennessee, there stretches a long, low mountain, known as Rocky Face Ridge on account of its steep, precipitous cliffs. Three miles from its northern end the mountain is broken in twain by a small stream, and the gap is called Mill Creek Gap, taking its name from the stream which flows through it. On either side of the creek the rugged sides of the mountain stretch away to the north and south, wooded to the summit, and the place is known through all the country round as "Buzzard Roost."

The northern end of Rocky Face is broken into a succession of rough, wooded hills. One of these hills runs southwest, thence south, paralleling the ridge, the two being separated by a narrow valley. By means of a tunnel the railroad from Chattanooga to Atlanta passes through this hill, which is hence called Tunnel Hill.

After piercing the hill, the railroad winds

through the little valley, thence through Mill Creek Gap on to Dalton. The wagon-road passes around the southern end of Tunnel Hill, and then through the gap close to the railroad.

It was along the summit of Rocky Face Ridge and in the rugged defiles of Mill Creek Gap that the Confederate army, under the command of General Joseph E. Johnston, lay strongly fortified in the spring of 1864. General Grant had been called to the supreme command of the United States forces, and was in the East. The Federal army in and around Chattanooga was under the command of Major-General W. T. Sherman. This



GENERAL SHERMAN.

general had gathered together an army of one hundred thousand men for his onward march to Atlanta.

General Sherman's army consisted of three distinct organizations, known as the Army of the Cumberland, under the command of Major-General George H. Thomas; the Army of the Tennessee, under the command of Major-General James B. McPherson, and the Army of the Ohio, under the command of Major-General John M. Schofield.

The Army of the Cumberland consisted of the Fourth, Fourteenth, and Twentieth Corps, commanded respectively by Generals Oliver O. Howard, John M. Palmer, and Joseph Hooker.

The Army of the Tennessee consisted of the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and afterwards the Seventeenth Corps, commanded respectively by Generals John A. Logan, G. M. Dodge, and Frank P. Blair.

The Army of the Ohio consisted of only one corps, the Twenty-third.

For the first time in the history of the war the armies of the Federal government were to be directed by one master mind. There was to be no more playing at cross-purposes. Grant and Sherman were to move at the same time, the former to crush the Army of Virginia under General Robert E. Lee, and capture Richmond; the latter to defeat the Confederate army under General Joseph E. Johnston, and take Atlanta. The grand forward movement of both armies was to commence on the first of May, but it was the third of the month before General Sherman had concentrated the whole of his army and taken the one step forward which commenced the Atlanta campaign.

To oppose General Sherman's immense army, General Joseph E. Johnston had fifty thousand men in and around Dalton, and twenty thousand more were hastening to reinforce him. The difference in numbers was fully compensated by the strong defensive positions at the command of General Johnston, which Sherman must attack and capture. Thus nearly two hundred thousand men were soon to engage in a death-struggle.

If one had stood on Tunnel Hill on the morning of May 8, 1864, a most magnificent sight would

have met his view. It was a beautiful Sabbath morning. The sun shone brightly, a gentle breeze stirred the leaves of the trees, all fair and smiling lay the landscape.

Along the crest of Tunnel Hill stretched long lines of Federal soldiers. The barrels of ten thousand rifles caught the rays of the sun and shone like a stream of burnished silver. Rocky Face Ridge, wooded to the summit, lay before and towering above these Federal lines. Its forests nodded and beckoned as if to say, "Come and rest in our cooling shade."

The mountain gave forth no signs of life. But the soldiers who looked upon its wooded heights knew that it was but a slumbering volcano, that death lurked behind each tree and rock and crag. High above it, buzzards wheeled and circled, and the soldiers saw and shuddered.

On the Hill a little group of officers sat on their horses surveying the Ridge through their glasses. A little apart from this group, mounted on a magnificent bay horse, sat a young officer, gazing not on the mountain, but out over the country toward Chattanooga. The scene was one of surpassing beauty. Before him lay hill and dale, mountain and valley. Half-way to Chattanooga he could see the top of the forest which covered the bloody field of Chickamauga. Low in the horizon could be traced the dim outline of Lookout.

But the gaze of the young officer did not linger long on the distant view; it was fixed on the valley

that lay at the foot of the Hill. Through it were winding long columns of men. As far as the eye could reach the line could be traced. Hundreds of lumbering white-covered wagons, each drawn by six mules, were crawling along, raising clouds of dust. To the marching columns and crawling trains there seemed to be no end. It would have taken not only hours, but days, for that army, with its trains, to pass a given point.

Long did the officer look, as if fascinated by the sight. Suddenly a band commenced playing, and the stirring notes of "The Star-Spangled Banner" brought cheer after cheer from the soldiers. The marching columns in the valley took up the shout, and it rolled along the line until it died away in the distance like the faint murmur of falling water. But from Rocky Face there came back no answering shout. The mountain still lay wrapped in silence.

The band played selection after selection, and at last the notes of "Home, Sweet Home" floated softly through the air. The soldiers became silent. Heads were bowed, lips trembled, eyes grew moist. They saw no more the frowning mountain, the long lines of battle. Instead, there came visions of the green fields and broad prairies of the North. They heard the ringing of church-bells, saw the faces of loved ones watching and praying, and heads were bowed lower, and tears stained more than one bronzed cheek.

The music died away, and then the solemn

silence was broken by the roar of a cannon, and a shell went shrieking through the air. A moment more, and those who gazed saw a puff of white smoke away up on the side of Rocky Face, and then there came back a dull reverberation. The shell had struck and exploded. Again the gun roared, and battery after battery joined in the mighty chorus. All along the crest of Rocky Face could be seen puffs of white smoke, caused by the exploding shells; but the rocky palisades flung back the fragments in derision. The mountain still lay wrapped, as it were, in slumber.

“Attention!”

The long lines of blue were on their feet in an instant.

“Forward—march!”

The lines moved down the hill, across the narrow valley. Still the mountain gave forth no sign of life. Clouds of skirmishers were thrown out, and entered the nodding forest at the foot of the ridge.

Now the mountain, which had lain so long lifeless, burst into flame and smoke. Behind tree and rock crouched gray-coated veterans ready stoutly to dispute each foot of ground. The great conflict for the possession of Atlanta had begun, and yet Atlanta was more than one hundred miles away, behind many a mountain-range and river.

When the first cannon shot was fired, the young officer mentioned started as if from a trance, and wheeling his horse, rode to the side of General Thomas; for he was on the staff of that distin-

guished officer. He watched with kindling eye the long lines of men as they moved forward down the Hill, across the valley, and then commenced the ascent of Rocky Face. Slowly the Federal skirmishers pushed their way up the mountain, but near the top they found a perpendicular barrier of rock.

General Thomas, who had been closely observing the conflict, saw that the skirmishers had been halted at the palisades, and turning to the young staff officer, said: "Captain, I wish you would go forward, examine carefully the top of the mountain, then ride to the left and see if it can be ascended from the northern end. Do not try to approach the enemy's lines too closely, and avoid all danger possible. Come back and report after you have made a thorough examination."

The young captain saluted, and rode away on his mission. Frederic Shackelford was General Thomas's Chief of Scouts. He was young, not yet twenty, but had already distinguished himself by his many daring deeds. Entering the army as a scout to General William Nelson almost at the commencement of the war, he had no slight part in saving Kentucky to the Union. After the lamentable death of Nelson, he was appointed on the staff of General Thomas, and was chosen by that officer as his Chief of Scouts.

We now find him acting in that capacity. His father was a distinguished general in the Confederate army, and thus father and son were arrayed the

one against the other. It was two hours before Fred, as we shall call the young captain, returned.

"General," he reported, "I have examined the position of the enemy carefully, approaching their lines as closely as I deemed prudent."

"A little closer than prudence demanded, I think," said the general, as he glanced at Fred's left shoulder, where the shoulder-strap had been torn away by a ball.

"Oh! that's nothing," replied Fred, with a laugh. "A sharpshooter tried his marksmanship on me. Pretty good shot, but a trifle high. I find," he continued, "that it is utterly impossible for our soldiers to reach the top of the mountain. Near the summit there is a perpendicular ledge of rock from thirty to fifty feet high, and there is scarcely a rift in it. From the top one man can hold twenty at bay."

"But the northern end, cannot that be carried?" asked the general, earnestly.

"General Newton's division has already carried the northern end," replied Fred, "and is on top; but the summit is a perfect razor-back, in places hardly wide enough for half a dozen men to walk abreast. The mountain cannot be carried by assault; it must be flanked, or the Gap stormed."

"It will never do to storm the Gap," replied the general; "it would prove a slaughter-pen for our soldiers. I know General Sherman has no such intention. Ah! There he comes now."

Fred looked and saw General W. T. Sherman

and his staff riding slowly along the top of the hill toward them. General Sherman was at that time in the full strength of his manhood. Straight as an arrow, restless and nervous in his movements, his eyes keen and piercing, he was every inch a soldier. Kind and obliging, he not only had the confidence of every soldier in his army, but was greatly beloved by all. General Sherman, like Grant, was not a very strict disciplinarian or a stickler for military etiquette. He looked more to the fighting qualities of his men than to their appearance.

Dismounting, he spoke to General Thomas, who also dismounted, and the two, stepping a short distance to one side, engaged in an earnest conversation.

“What you have told me of this place is correct,” said General Sherman; “both the mountain and the Gap seem to me impregnable. It is certain that neither can be taken without an immense sacrifice of life. I have already acted on your suggestion, and McPherson is on his way to turn the enemy’s position by marching through Snake Creek Gap. His orders are to capture Resaca, if possible, and then to throw his army astride of the railroad and hold it. If he can do this, Johnston’s army is in our grasp.”

“If he find Resaca too strongly held to justify storming it, have you given him positive orders to seize and hold the railroad north of the town?” asked General Thomas.

“No, not positively; his orders are somewhat discretionary,” answered Sherman.

"General," exclaimed Thomas, earnestly, "I wish you had let me make this movement through Snake Creek Gap with the Army of the Cumberland, as I requested. I am afraid McPherson's force is too small to accomplish what you desire, and success there means everything. If not too late—"

"It is too late," broke in General Sherman, impatiently. "I thought we discussed that point fully. I dare not confront Johnston with the Army of the Cumberland gone; it comprises a good two-thirds of my force. McPherson must make the movement; he is already well on his way."

General Thomas bowed in acquiescence, and replied: "Very well, General. I will not discuss the subject further. I realize that you are pursuing the safer plan."

"Do you know anything about Snake Creek Gap?" asked General Sherman. "Would it be difficult to force, if stoutly defended even by a small force?"

"It would," answered General Thomas. "It is a narrow defile, about six miles long, I am told, and the sides of the mountains inclosing it are steep and rugged. If defended even by a small force, it would prove very troublesome. My hope is that it is unguarded."

"Is there any possible way of finding out before McPherson attempts the passage?" asked Sherman.

"I have an officer who can find out, if any one can," was General Thomas's reply.

“Who is he?”

“Captain Shackelford, the commander of my scouts.”

“Let me see him immediately.”

General Thomas turned and beckoned to an orderly, who at once obeyed the summons, and in a moment came back and said to Fred, “The General desires to see you, Captain.”

“This is the officer of whom I spoke, General,” said Thomas as Fred came up, saluted, and stood at attention.

General Sherman turned his keen eyes on Fred, regarded him steadily for a moment, and seemed struck with his youthful appearance, when a smile of recognition came over his face, and he remarked, “I think we have met before, Captain.”

“Yes, General,” replied Fred; “at Louisville. I brought you dispatches from eastern Kentucky, from General Nelson.”

“Ah! I remember; you are the boy, too, who threw the train off the track, and thus prevented Buckner from capturing Louisville.* You found me in a towering rage that morning. D—— me, it makes me mad yet when I think of it. The newspapers called me crazy. There is no knowing what they will call me before I get through with this campaign, especially if I am unsuccessful. But, Captain, General Thomas has recommended you as a proper officer to find out whether Snake Creek Gap is held in force by the enemy or not. I am

* See “General Nelson’s Scout.”

well pleased with his selection. McPherson is already en route for the Gap. He must force his way through to-morrow, or the enemy will take alarm and have the Gap strongly defended. If he find it unguarded, he can rush through, instead of carefully feeling his way."

"I will try my best to find out, General," replied Fred, modestly.

"I have no fears on that score; but remember that much may depend on your success. You had better ride around by Vilanow, and report to McPherson on your way. Let him know as soon as possible what you find. Another thing, be sure and don't alarm the enemy if you find them."

"I will be careful about that, General. I only hope that I shall find the way clear, and that by to-morrow at this time McPherson will have Resaca and that the rebel army will be in your power."

It did not take Fred long to make his preparations. He took with him only his trusted lieutenant, Richard Darling, and four of his best and bravest scouts. Each one of the party had a Confederate uniform rolled up in his blanket. It was three o'clock in the afternoon when they started, and Snake Creek Gap was twenty miles away.

CHAPTER II.

SNAKE CREEK GAP.

RIDING rapidly to the south, Fred and his little company were soon abreast of General Hooker's corps. This general, finding that the mountain in his front was held by a weak line, thought he might be able to take it by storm; and as Fred passed, General Geary's division was assaulting a depression in the mountain known as Dug Gap.

Halting a moment, Fred gazed upward at the sublime and awful spectacle. The whole side of the mountain was smoking like a volcano. So far off were Geary's men that they looked like so many ants trying to crawl up the palisades. A few of the bravest succeeded in reaching the top, but they were met with bayonet and clubbed musket, and hurled back, falling on the jagged rocks below. Great stones, pried from the top of the palisades, came thundering down the mountain-side, carrying death and destruction in their path.

Fred shuddered, and giving the command, "Forward!" soon left the roar of the conflict behind. A ride of two hours brought the little party to Vilanow, a hamlet a few miles from the mouth of

Snake Creek Gap. Here Fred met General McPherson, and was charmed with his noble bearing and modest demeanor. General McPherson was one of the most distinguished-looking officers in the Federal army. He was young, only thirty-four, and was the idol of his soldiers.

General Sherman had great confidence in the ability of McPherson, and had intrusted him with the command of the movement through Snake Creek Gap—the movement which General Thomas so desired to make. If successful, it might mean the destruction of Johnston's army at the very beginning of the campaign. It was for this reason that General Thomas was so anxious to be allowed to make the movement, and with a force large enough to insure success.

When Fred informed General McPherson of his orders and what was expected of him, the general shook his head, and said: "I am a little sorry General Sherman gave you these orders. Whatever you do must be done to-night, for I shall be ready to enter the Gap with my whole army early in the morning. You may be able to find out whether the Gap is garrisoned or not, but at the same time you may alarm the enemy, and thus make my task harder."

"Do not be alarmed, General," answered Fred, quietly. "The moment we are outside of your lines we shall disguise ourselves as Confederates."

"That is a dangerous game, Captain."

"Our duty compels us to play at dangerous

games," responded Fred. "If I understand your movement, General, its success greatly depends on the celerity with which it is made. Now, not knowing whether Snake Creek Gap is defended or not, you will be forced to advance slowly and with great caution. If you knew the Gap was open, you could rush through, and arrive at Resaca before the enemy was aware of your movement."

"That is very true," was McPherson's reply; "but suppose you find the Gap garrisoned?"

"You will then be forewarned, and make preparations accordingly."

"That is true also, Captain, and I only wish that you may be successful. But any knowledge you may gain, to be of service to me, must be reported before daylight."

"I will try to be on time; but, General, I must be going, for the sun is scarcely an hour high, and I wish to reach the mouth of the Gap by sundown. I hope to see you again before morning, and bring you a good report."

So saying, Fred and his little party galloped away.

General McPherson stood looking after them until out of sight; then turning to one of his staff, he said: "That Captain Shackelford is a promising young officer. I have heard of him; he has the name of being one of the most reliable scouts in the army. But it is a dangerous game he is playing to-night; it is also a little doubtful as to its expediency. If he succeed only in alarming the

enemy, it will make my task the more difficult. If it were any other man than Shackelford, I should have been decidedly opposed to the attempt. As it is, I believe it to be all right. Inform our pickets that there is a scouting party out dressed in Confederate uniform. I gave Captain Shackelford the countersign for to-night, so that he can come into our lines at any time."

The officer saluted, and rode away to carry out the general's orders, but as he went he muttered: "I had rather be here than in Captain Shackelford's boots. Ticklish business that, dressing up in rebel uniform."

As soon as Fred was well out of the Federal lines he halted, and said: "Now, boys, we will dress"; and in a few minutes, instead of Federal soldiers, they appeared to be a party of dashing Confederate troopers.

"If we are caught in this rig, boys," remarked Fred, "remember it's death, and death in its most degrading form."

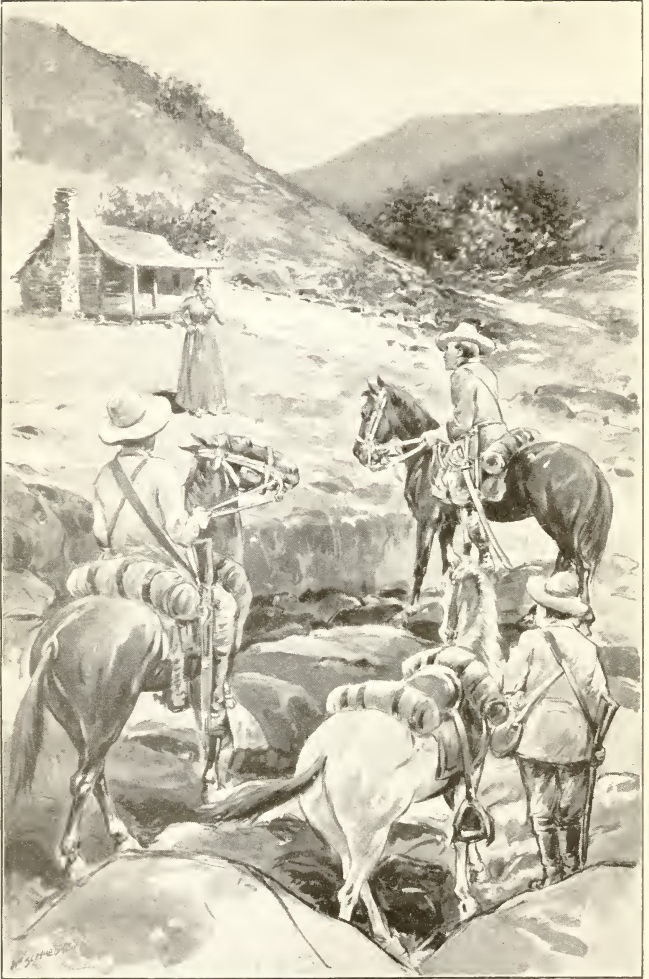
"I shall never be captured alive," quietly replied Darling. "When I put on this color it means success or death."

"And so here, ' cried the others.

Fred smiled. "Boys," he exclaimed, "I reckon we understand each other, and are all of one mind. Now forward, or it will be dark before we reach the Gap."

"What if we meet the Johnnies?" asked Darling.

"Fool them, if we can; if not, fight them to the



"MY GOOD WOMAN, HAVE YOU SEEN ANY YANKS?"

death; there is nothing else for us to do," was the reply.

They rode rapidly forward for about half an hour without adventure, and just as the sun was sinking to rest they approached the mouth of the Gap. Seeing a house near by which showed signs of being inhabited, Fred thought he would make a few inquiries. Riding up to the house, he found no one at home but women.

"My good woman," said Fred to a slatternly looking female who presented herself, chewing a snuff-dipping stick, "have you seen any Yanks?"

"Yanks!" she screamed, in a shrill falsetto; "Yanks! Be the Yanks cumin'? Oh, what will we-uns do? What will we-uns do?"

"Do not get excited, madam," replied Fred; "I only asked you if you had seen any. I did not know but a scouting party might have ventured this far, but it is hardly probable."

"No," answered the woman; "I haven't seen eny, an' I don't want to. But I hev heard big guns 'way up no'th. Be they fightin'?"

"Yes," answered Fred; "around Buzzard Roost. Have you seen any Confederate soldiers here lately?"

"Confederate solgers!" asked the woman, with a puzzled expression on her face; "who be they?"

"Why, our soldiers—Southern soldiers," said Fred, correcting himself.

"Thar was sum critter solgers heah yest'rday," she answered.

Just then a sharp word of warning from Darling caused Fred to look up, and he saw a troop of Confederate cavalry, numbering at least fifty, bearing down on them.

"Keep cool," said Fred, in a low tone; "show no signs of fear, but if it comes to the worst, sell your lives as dearly as possible."

Fred then deliberately rode forward a few paces to meet the Confederate officer in command.

"I am Captain Shackelford of the First Kentucky Cavalry," said Fred; "whom have I the honor of addressing?"

"Captain Seabright of the Twelfth Mississippi," was the answer; "what are you doing down here, Captain?"

"I am on my way to Rome with important dispatches for General Polk. General Johnston is fearful that part of the Yankee army under McPherson may move on Rome by the way of Lafayette."

"Was it not risky to come this side of the mountain?" asked Captain Seabright.

"General Johnston wished me to do so. He thought if McPherson was moving south, I might discover the fact, and also whether he was threatening Rome or Resaca."

Captain Seabright started. "Resaca!" he exclaimed; "I hope McPherson will not try to pass through Snake Creek Gap, at least not for the next two days."

"I reckon there is no danger," answered Fred. "I have ascertained there are no Yankees at

Vilanow, nor have there been, except a small scouting party. But why do you say you hope that McPherson will not attempt to pass through Snake Creek Gap, at least not for the next two days?"

"Because it is now totally unprotected. General Canty has become alarmed, and has sent to Johnston for a brigade of cavalry to protect it. They are expected some time to-morrow."

"Is that so? I must have left before the telegram arrived. But General Canty need not be alarmed; the cavalry will have an abundance of time to reach the Gap before it can possibly be threatened. It looks now as if Johnston were giving the whole Yankee army all it wants around Buzzard Roost. Their lines now extend but a little south of Dug Gap."

"I am glad to hear that, yet General Canty will not rest easy until the cavalry comes. I am under orders from him now to scout as far as Vilanow to see if the enemy has any force there."

"I scarcely see any necessity for your doing that now, as I have just ascertained that fact."

"Orders must be obeyed," Captain Seabright answered, sharply, and with a keen look at Fred.

"You are right, Captain," answered Fred, without a change of countenance; "I did not know your orders were positive."

"I believe you said your name was Shackelford?" said Captain Seabright, still eying Fred closely; "are you any relation of General Richard Shackelford of our army?"

"I am happy to say he is a relative of mine," replied Fred, quietly. "But, Captain, I must bid you good-night, as we have a long ride before us. May good fortune attend you. Come on, boys!" And with these words Fred and his party galloped southward.

Captain Seabright gazed after them through the gathering shades of night until out of sight. Then turning to one of his lieutenants, he said: "I wish I had questioned that fellow more closely. I didn't like his suggestion of my not going to Vilanow when I had orders to go there. It looks strange. That may have been a party of Yanks in disguise."

"Well, if that captain is a Yank, he is a cool one," answered the lieutenant.

"There is one satisfaction," replied Seabright; "if he is a Yank, he will not go south far before he will get into trouble. But come on, boys; we shall soon see whether he told the truth or not about there being no Yankees at Vilanow." And the whole party set out at a sharp gallop for that place.

Captain Seabright was as cautious as well as a brave man, and he rode with two of his best men in advance to guard against surprise. They had not gone more than two miles when they rose over the brow of a hill which overlooked Vilanow. Captain Seabright reined in his horse, with an exclamation of surprise. For miles up and down the valley camp-fires glowed. The whole of McPherson's army lay before him. He gave one look, and then

muttered: "Captain Shackelford, I wish I had you here, and a rope around your neck."

Riding forward a few paces to get a better view, he was suddenly challenged, and the sentry not receiving any answer, fired. The ball whistled uncomfortably close to the captain's head. Wheeling his horse, he galloped back to his command.

"Boys," he cried, "that Captain Shackelford deceived us. McPherson's whole army is before us. They are making for Snake Creek Gap. Let us get back and give the alarm before a regiment of Yankee cavalry is on us."

But already the thundering of horses' hoofs gave notice that the Yankee regiment was coming. Wheeling their horses, the Confederates rode at full speed back over the road over which they had just come.

We will now return to Fred and his party. No sooner were they out of sight and hearing than Fred ordered a halt. "Boys," he exclaimed, "that was a close call. I came near putting my foot in it when I suggested to that captain that he need not go to Vilanow. But I was playing for a big stake. I got the information I wanted, but it looks now as if it would do us precious little good."

"Why?" asked Darling.

"Why?" echoed Fred. "Don't you see those rebels will strike McPherson's advance. It is night, and the soldiers will have camp-fires lighted. Those scouts will discover that there is a great army before them, that it is making for Snake

Creek Gap, and the result will be that by morning the Gap will be strongly defended. That is the reason I risked so much in trying to keep that captain from going to Vilanow. Boys, that squadron of cavalry must be stopped—captured—or McPherson's movement will come to naught."

"But how?" asked Darling. "We are six, they are fifty."

"Nevertheless," Fred exclaimed, with vehemence, "they must be stopped, and we must stop them."

If it had been light, Fred would have seen that his men were looking at him with wondering eyes, as though they thought him crazy.

"I tell you, boys," Fred again cried, "they must be stopped, and I believe we can stop them. Hear!"

Fred unfolded his plan to them. They listened in silence until he was through, and then they cried: "Bravo, Captain, bravo! We are with you. It is dark, and the plan will work."

"Come on, then," answered Fred, "for we have no time to lose."

Turning their horses, they galloped back after the Confederates, who had fifteen minutes the start. They had ridden about two miles when the faint sound of a shot was borne back to them.

"There!" exclaimed Fred; "they have struck our pickets. They will be coming back in a moment, and here is a good place to try our plan."

There were thick woods on each side of the road,

making it so dark that objects could not be distinguished five paces away.

“Now, Darling,” rapidly continued Fred, “you take Avery and advance about fifty yards, and take position on one side of the road. You, Craig, take the other side alone. Owens and Adams will stay with me. When the rebels come, we will halt them and stop them if possible. Then, Darling, you and Avery on one side of the road, and Craig on his side, make all the noise possible. Give commands as if you had a large force. Tell them not to fire without orders. No doubt the pursuing cavalry will be close behind them, and if we can halt them until our men come up, we can bag them.”

“But, Captain,” said Darling, “you and the two with you will have the most dangerous place. Let me stay with you.”

“No; do as I direct. Quick, they are coming!”

The swift beating of horses' feet could be heard coming down the road, and Darling, Avery, and Craig hastened to take their positions.

“Steady, now,” whispered Fred to the two men with him. “Don't give ground; let them ride over you first. If they don't halt at the first command, fire, but shoot at the horses, not the men. If we can bring down the foremost horses, the rest will halt.”

On came the Confederates in headlong flight, not dreaming of danger. Suddenly there came the sharp command: “Halt there! Surrender! You are surrounded!”

Such was the speed of the Confederates, they

could not have halted at once if they had tried. The heavy navy revolvers of Fred and his two companions blazed. Captain Seabright's horse fell dead. Four or five other horses were killed or badly injured, and several of the Confederates were disabled by being crushed by the fallen horses. Bewildered and confounded, the rest of the Confederates came to a halt.

From each side of the road came a stern command to surrender. Then: "Steady, boys, steady! Don't fire without orders. Let there be no needless slaughter."

"Surrender!" cried the clear voice of Fred again; "you are surrounded."

Captain Seabright, who had struggled to his feet, hearing the commands to surrender coming from both sides of the road, as well as in his front, believed that his command was entirely surrounded by an overwhelming force, and called out: "Don't fire! We surrender."

Just then the pursuing force came up. "Don't fire, don't fire!" the hindmost Confederates yelled in desperation, fearing they would be fired upon; "we have surrendered."

"The h—— you have!" was the answer. "Whom have you surrendered to?"

"Don't know, but we are surrounded."

"They have surrendered to Captain Shackelford's party," answered Darling, who had advanced to meet the Federal officer, and in a few words explained the situation.

The officer uttered an exclamation of surprise, but quickly ordered his men to disarm the captured rebels, and be sure to see that not a single one escaped.

It was not until the prisoners were safe inside of the Federal lines that they learned the ruse played upon them. The rage and chagrin of Captain Seabright knew no bounds when the truth was made known to him. He raved like a madman.

“Curse you!” he yelled, shaking his fist at Fred. “I might have known you were a Yankee in disguise. I did suspect you, but like a fool let you go. But I will be even with you yet; I will live to see you hanged.”

“You are excited, Captain,” coolly replied Fred; “but you will have plenty of time when you get to Johnson Island* to cool off. But come with me now; I want to give you the honor of introducing you to a very distinguished man, Major-General McPherson of the Federal army.”

The captain, seeing it was folly to continue his tirade, sulkily rode with Fred to the headquarters of General McPherson.

“Why, Captain,” exclaimed the general when he saw Fred, “back already, and with a prisoner?”

“Yes, General; and I am happy to report that I have been entirely successful, and have secured the required information. The Gap is at present entirely unguarded, but a brigade of cavalry has

*An island in Lake Erie near Sandusky, Ohio, where Confederate officers taken prisoner were confined.

been ordered to occupy it, and will be down from Dalton some time to-morrow. For this valuable information I am indebted to this gentleman. General, allow me to introduce Captain Seabright of the Twelfth Mississippi Cavalry. He was kind enough to accompany me, with some fifty of his men, into our lines."

"Ah, Captain Seabright, I am glad to make your acquaintance," said the general.

But Captain Seabright proudly drew himself up to his full height, and haughtily replied:

"General McPherson, I am the victim of a most contemptible Yankee trick, played upon me not by a gentleman, but by a spy. I despise any one who had any part in any such unsoldierly conduct."

"Indeed," answered General McPherson, with a smile. "Here," turning to an orderly, "take this gentleman and turn him over to the provost marshal. I did intend to entertain him myself to-night, but I see my company would not be agreeable."

The orderly took the irate captain and marched him away, and Fred never heard of him again. When he had gone, the general turned to Fred and asked him the particulars of his trip, and how he managed to capture the captain with fifty of his men.

After Fred had given a full account of what had happened, he said: "General McPherson, if it had not been for Major Croft, who so promptly pursued the Confederates when they struck his pickets,

I could never have got away with so many prisoners. He should have much of the credit."

"The major shall receive due reward for his promptness," said McPherson; "but to you, Captain Shackelford, there are no words which I can say that will reward you for the service you have performed this night. But General Sherman shall know. Have you any further orders from General Sherman?"

"Yes, General; if I should be successful, I was to stay with you in your movement through the Gap, and give you all the aid possible."

"I am glad to hear it. Be my guest for the night. To-morrow promises to be a lively day with us."

Darling was sent back with dispatches to General Sherman, telling him that the Gap had been found unguarded, and that Resaca would undoubtedly be captured some time the next day. General Sherman smiled when he read the dispatch. Early the next morning he gave orders that the Confederates should be heavily pressed along the front of Rocky Face, and throughout the whole day the battle roared and thundered, but it was more noisy than dangerous.

Early on the morning of May 9th McPherson moved his army through Snake Creek Gap unopposed. As he debouched from the eastern end of the Gap, he met Debrell's brigade of cavalry, which was on its way to defend it. The brigade was scattered after a short fight, and by two o'clock the Army of

the Tennessee was before Resaca. But General McPherson found it defended by a larger force than he had expected. Neither did he find the railroad as it was laid down on his map. It lay farther to the east.

The brave and gallant McPherson now committed the error of his life. Fearful that if he moved far enough to the east to seize the railroad, Johnston would throw his whole army in between him and the Gap, thus cutting him off from the rest of the army, he ordered a retreat to the mouth of the Gap. He was also poorly prepared for a heavy engagement, being short both in ammunition and provisions; so he fell back, leaving the way open for Johnston to retreat.

When Fred heard the order to fall back he was astounded, but it was not for him to remonstrate. He saw that so far as destroying the Confederate army was concerned the movement was a failure; that what might have been one of the most brilliant successes of the war had come to naught. He remembered how earnestly General Thomas wanted to make the movement, and felt that if he had made it the command to retire would never have been given. With Thomas and the Army of the Cumberland where McPherson was, Johnston's army would have been doomed.

General McPherson took a strong position at the mouth of the Gap, and sent Fred back with dispatches to General Sherman telling him of the situation.

It was midnight when Fred reached Sherman's headquarters, but his dispatches were so important that the general was aroused, and Fred admitted.

When Sherman read the dispatch a shade of disappointment came over his face. Without a word he put the dispatch aside, and arising, restlessly paced to and fro, his hands locked behind him, his head bowed, and apparently in deep thought, oblivious of any one present. Then he suddenly turned to Fred and began to deluge him with questions.

At last Fred was dismissed, but as he turned to go he thought he heard General Sherman mutter: "Too bad! too bad! But I should have given McPherson more positive orders."

There is no doubt that General McPherson's failure to seize and hold the railroad near Resaca was one of the bitterest disappointments which befell Sherman during the Atlanta campaign. His hopes of crushing the Confederate army at the very commencement of the campaign were dispelled. Yet it was not in his heart to chide General McPherson. He recognized that he himself was greatly to blame for not having given more positive orders. So when he met the general all he did was to take him by the hand and say: "General McPherson, I am sorry. You missed a chance which comes to no man more than once in a lifetime."

Notwithstanding his disappointment, General Sherman relaxed none of his energy. He at once gave orders for the bulk of his army to move

through Snake Creek Gap to the support of McPherson, leaving only the Fourth Corps and Stoneman's cavalry to confront Johnston at Rocky Face. Thus General Sherman, who had refused to let the Army of the Cumberland make the movement to Johnston's rear, under the plea that it would weaken his army too much, was forced at last to leave only one corps in front of the whole Confederate army and run the risk of its being attacked and overwhelmed.

General Johnston discovered Sherman's movement in force to his rear, and on the night of May 12th he evacuated his stronghold on Rocky Face and in the Buzzard Roost, and fell back to Resaca, where the two armies were destined to meet in battle.

CHAPTER III.

RESACA.

THAT the Confederate army had escaped without being severely punished was a source of the deepest mortification not only to General Sherman, but to his entire army. Many were the opinions offered by different members of General Thomas's staff as they discussed the matter around the camp-fire, but all agreed that if "Old Pap" had been permitted to make the movement through Snake Creek Gap, the result would have been different. The coming battle put all vain regrets out of their minds, and the matter was hardly ever alluded to afterwards.

By the afternoon of the 14th General Sherman had his army well in hand around Resaca. General Johnston had been reinforced until his army numbered at least seventy thousand men. Everything indicated that he intended to make a desperate stand. The thunder of more than a hundred cannon shook the earth, and rattling volleys of musketry echoed and reëchoed among the hills. Most of the field was densely wooded, and in the tangled thickets deeds of blood were enacted which the sun did not see, and of which only those engaged knew.

It is well that everybody in a battle is too busy to notice its horrors.

All along their front the Confederates were pressed back into their main line of works. Even these in places were charged by the gallant men of the Armies of the Ohio and the Tennessee, but they could not penetrate the morass and the abattis in front of the Confederate line, where they charged; therefore they were forced to fall back.

The left of the Federal army was held by General Stanley's division of the Fourth Corps. It had to force its way through thick woods and tangled underbrush, fighting at every step. There was no cavalry on the left to prevent the division from being flanked and surprised. General Thomas fearing this, sent Fred with his scouts to the left to reconnoiter.

"This brush is thicker than dog-hair," growled Darling to Fred. "How does the general expect us to learn anything in such a tangle as this? The first thing we know we will run plump into the Johnnies, and then good-bye to us."

"It is a precious good place for the Johnnies to creep around undiscovered," replied Fred. "Let us go a little farther to the left; perhaps we shall find the forest a little more open."

Cautiously making their way to the left of the line of firing, they stopped and listened intently. There was no sound that could be called a sound, yet there seemed to come through the forest an

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FRED TOOK ONE LONG LOOK, AND THAT WAS ENOUGH.

indefinable something—a trembling in the air, as if the earth were in an agony of fear

“Ugh!” whispered Darling, “this is uncanny; I seem to feel instead of hear something. It is as though the forest were breathing—actually throbbing with life.”

“And so it may be,” answered Fred. “I wish I could see what is in front; and I mean to,” he continued, as his eye fell on a tree which towered above its companions. “I am going to climb that tree.”

“Be careful some Johnny don’t take you for a squirrel and bring you down,” said Darling.

“I must run that risk,” replied Fred; “so here goes.”

Fred was a good climber, and soon was in the topmost branches of the tree, but he was careful to keep the trunk between him and the enemy. Once at the top, Fred took one long look, and that was enough. Out in front he could see regiment after regiment of the enemy forming. Away off on the flank he caught a line of gray stealing around in the rear of the Federal line. General Hood was preparing to emulate Stonewall Jackson in one of his celebrated flank movements.

Just as Fred was on the point of descending, zip! came a ball past his head. Some Confederate sharpshooter had caught sight of him. Fred came down much faster than he went up, but he got a ball through his blouse-sleeve before he reached the ground.

“It was about time I was out of there,” he said, as he glanced at his sleeve. “That fellow shoots too close for comfort; he might manage to hit me. But come, boys; there is going to be a hot time around here in a few moments.”

Springing on their horses, they dashed through the woods to give warning of the coming blow.



GENERAL THOMAS.

Finding General Stanley, Fred checked his horse long enough to say: “General, your flank is about to be attacked. If you can hold your position for a short time, I shall report the situation to General Thomas, and he will doubtless send you reinforcements.” And he was off at full speed.

General Thomas once reached, Fred told his story in a dozen words. “There,” replied General Thomas, pointing to a division of soldiers in reserve, “is General Williams’s division of the Twentieth Corps. Present my compliments, and tell the general to take his division to the threatened point as quickly as possible—and, Captain, you guide him.”

Putting spurs to his horse, Fred was away when the words were hardly out of General Thomas’s mouth to carry the orders to General Williams. The general received the orders, gave a few quick, sharp commands, and the division was double-quicking to the left. But to Fred,

in his excitement, they seemed to move all too slowly.

“Make haste, General,” he would say, “or they will be on our boys before we can get there.”

“The men are doing all they can now, Captain. They must not be exhausted when we reach the field of action,” replied the general; but he sent back his aides to repeat the orders to hurry.

Suddenly there came from away over on the left that well-known cry, the rebel yell, then crashing volleys of musketry.

“The blow has fallen,” exclaimed Fred.

General Williams turned in his saddle, and swinging his hat, shouted: “Come on, boys! come on! The Twentieth Corps to the rescue!”

But Hooker’s gallant men needed no urging; with cheers they sprang forward, remembering only that their comrades were in danger.

The crashes of musketry grew less frequent, but the rebel yell sounded nearer and more exultant, and there were no answering Federal cheers.

“They are driving our men,” groaned Fred. “Why, our fellows are not even firing; they are fleeing to save themselves. I feared it; there is not a ghost of a chance for them in those thick woods.”

All at once the thunder of a battery shook the forest. It sounded as though twenty instead of six cannon were belching forth their iron contents. The panting soldiers raised a cheer, and Fred swung his hat and urged them on.

Soon scattered fugitives were met, fleeing back through the woods, then broken companies and regiments. The two left brigades of the army had been scattered like chaff before the wind; their only safety lay in flight, and like wise soldiers they ran. When they saw Hooker's men they raised a mighty shout, halted, and began to rally around their colors.

But the battery had never ceased its thunder. Soon the advancing columns came on a scene which caused their blood to leap through their veins, and almost to drown the roar of battle with their cheers.

On a slight knoll, in the edge of a small cleared field, stood the Fifth Indiana Battery, enveloped in a cloud of flame and smoke. Support it had none, but with each man at his post, the guns, double-shotted with canister, were literally sweeping the enemy from the field. Time after time had the enemy essayed to cross that fatal field, only to be driven back with terrible slaughter. That iron hail was more than flesh and blood could stand. Alone and unaided the battery had checked the charge. But the enemy were creeping around on the flank, and would soon have had the battery enveloped, when Hooker's men appeared. Before their withering volleys, the enemy fled back through the woods from which they had driven the two hapless brigades. The Confederates were now the pursued instead of the pursuers, and fled in the wildest confusion.

Fired with the excitement of the moment, Fred

plunged into the thickest of the charge. As he was making his way through a dense thicket, he was surprised to see a Federal officer crawl out from a thick growth of underbrush which grew by the side of a log. The officer was holding by the collar a long, lank rebel soldier, who was shivering as though he had an ague fit.

Rising to his feet, the officer addressed himself to his prisoner. "Straighten up now, Johnny," he exclaimed, in mock commanding tones. "Take a soldierly position and salute your superior."

"Hugh Raymond, as I live," shouted Fred. "Captain Raymond, how in the world did you come burrowing under that log like a rabbit? Valiant Captain Raymond of all men, he who was one of the first to plant his flag on Missionary Ridge and win a captain's straps. Oh, Hugh, Hugh! what a figure you cut!" And Fred fairly shook with laughter.

The officer addressed as Captain Raymond surely did present a comical figure. His hat was gone, his uniform torn and covered with dirt and leaves, his sword was gone and the scabbard bent nearly double, and his face was scratched and bleeding in several places. He was as young as Fred and had a more boyish look.

"Look here, Fred Shackelford," answered the young captain, with a comical grimace, "don't be too fast. Just see my trophy. Here, Reb, straighten up; look your best. Can't you keep those infernal teeth of yours from chattering long

enough to say 'Good evening'? Let me introduce you to Captain Frederic Shackelford of General Thomas's staff. It's good company you are getting into, Reb—the best you ever met."

"How in the world did you come to get into such a fix, Hugh?" asked Fred.

"Oh, you see I was in command of the skirmishers, and the first thing I knew, the woods in front just swarmed with rebels. I gave the command to retreat, but there was no need, for as I turned around I only caught sight of the boys scudding through the woods like so many wild turkeys. I was all alone and nearly surrounded. The rebs commenced yelling to me to surrender, but I had no notion of trying the fare of a rebel prison, and I took after the boys. Run! The sprinting I did would have done honor to a professional. The whole rebel army shot at me—"

"Hold on, Hugh; make it a few less."

"Well, that is the way it appeared to me. One bullet struck my sword, broke it, and bent the scabbard as you see. Another one knocked my hat off. But I distanced them, and was congratulating myself on my escape when my toe caught under a root, and I plunged head first into that thicket. There was a depression in the ground under the log, and I rolled into it. The log and thicket screened me, and the rebs passed without noticing me. Here I was once more in the rear of the Confederate army, just as we were when we had to roost in that tree. The woods were full of

rebels. I could hear them running and shouting, and I durst not wiggle for fear of being discovered. Then some one plunged headlong into the thicket, and to my surprise this Johnny came creeping up close to me. One glance told me he was a skulker, and quaking with fear. He was so frightened he did not even notice I was a Yank, so I kept still. I knew my only salvation was in having the rebels driven back. When that battery opened, the rebs didn't yell quite so briskly, and I began to hope they would be driven back. Then when those volleys came and I heard our men cheering, I could hardly keep still from whooping myself."

"That was Hooker's men," broke in Fred. "I tell you they went in with a rush."

"Hooker, was it? Well, bully for Hooker. Sure enough in a little while back came the rebs, like so many stampeded Texan steers. When I was sure they had all passed, I said to Johnny here: 'Time to get out; come, get a move on you.'"

"You ought to have seen his eyes open. 'Yo-uns—yo-uns a Yank?' he stammered.

"'Of course I am a Yank; now get,' and I pulled my revolver; and the way he crawled from out that bush was a caution. Eh! Johnny, how do you feel?"

"All right," responded the rebel, who by this time had pulled himself together. "Mighty glad yo-uns a Yank. I won't have to fight eny mo'. Captain jes' swore he would shoot me if I run in

'nother fight. Reckon he thought I wuz shot when I went head fust in that air bush. That's the time I fooled 'em.'

"He is a brave one, Hugh," laughed Fred. "You should write to Kate telling her what a desperate fight you had to take him. Perhaps she would relent. Do you ever hear from Kate now?"

Hugh's brow clouded. "Fred," he exclaimed, "have all the fun you can, but I wish I had never seen that cousin of yours. I was fool enough to write to her, and guess what was her reply?"

"That she would be proud to correspond with so gallant a soldier as Captain Hugh Raymond."

"Proud!" replied Hugh, wearily. "She wrote, 'I do not wish to correspond with Yankees.'"

"Of course you obeyed?"

Hugh sighed. "There was a postscript."

"Oh, what was it?"

"'If you get killed, I will put posies on your grave.'"

"Poor Hugh! Didn't I tell you to let that fire-brand alone?"

"Oh, it's all right," answered Hugh; "the smart of a wound in love is to be preferred to coldness. Don't worry over me. I kind of like it. Come, Johnny (to the reb), let's be going. You are my only hope and salvation. You have saved my credit. How long was it I had to fight before I captured you? Half an hour, wasn't it? Oh, Johnny, you are a jewel, you are. So march."

And Captain Raymond started back with his prisoner.

It was now dark, and Fred rode back to make his report to General Thomas.

“We were just in time, General,” reported Fred, “to save the flank. The enemy had it completely turned when Williams’s division arrived. But they went scurrying back in quick time when we raised the cheer and charged them.”

“I am glad,” quietly responded General Thomas, “that you were in time. You deserve honorable mention for so promptly reporting the situation. It would have been very awkward for us to have had our flank turned.”

“General,” and Fred’s eyes kindled as he said it, “I want to say a word for the Fifth Indiana Battery. We found it entirely unsupported, but every man stood at his post, and the way that battery was pouring canister into the rebels was glorious—glorious! I never knew a battery could fire so fast.”

“Captain Simonson is a very brave man—none braver. It is just what I would expect of him,” was all the reply the general made.

That night both armies spent in fortifying and preparing for the struggle that was to come on the morrow. The next morning the rest of Hooker’s corps and the Army of the Ohio were moved to the left.

All through the day cannon roared and musketry rattled, but there was no severe fighting until about

three o'clock in the afternoon, when Hooker formed his columns and made a charge on a four-gun battery which occupied a lunette in front of the enemy's main works.

The charge was a desperate one, and for a time doubtful, but at last the gunners were forced from their pieces and the battery captured. But the rebels sprang over their works, and a hand-to-hand conflict took place over the guns. In turn the Federals were forced back, but took refuge behind the parapet which protected the guns, and held their position. When night came the guns were taken possession of by the Federals. Around that battery one could have walked on dead men.*

Farther to the left of the battery the fight raged in all its fury. The Army of the Ohio in its advance met the cohorts of Hood and drove them in confusion from the field. Night was now approaching, and the fiery Hood marshaled his forces to make one more effort to stay the Federal advance; but just as he was ready to charge, an aide of General Johnston dashed up and handed him a dispatch. He read it, and groaned. It was an order from General Johnston to cease all aggressive movements, to hold his lines until night, and then to fall back in retreat.

"General McPherson's forces," so read the dispatch, "have captured a hill from which his artillery commands the railroad as well as the wagon

*In the thickest of this charge was a future President of the United States, Benjamin Harrison.

bridge over the Oostanaula. In vain have the forces of General Polk tried to retake the hill. It is now so strongly fortified that it is impossible. Not only this, but a large force from the Army of the Tennessee is crossing the river at Lay's Ferry, and is already driving our cavalry back on Calhoun. Our communications will be in their possession by another day. Our only safety lies in rapid retreat."

So in the darkness of the night the Confederate army once more fell back, leaving the hard-fought field to the Federals.*

*The battle of Resaca came nearer being a general engagement, that is, a battle in which the whole army was engaged, than any other battle of the campaign. General Sherman's losses in the battle were between four and five thousand. The Confederate losses were nearly as great.

CHAPTER IV.

A BATTLE THAT WAS NEVER FOUGHT.

IT was long past midnight before the battlefield of Resaca grew silent; for to cover their retreat the Confederates put up a bold front, and to all appearances they intended to renew the battle on the coming day. So thought the Federal soldiers as they sank on the ground to secure a few minutes of repose. But the gray of the dawn revealed that the enemy was gone.

Screened from the Federals by the woods and hills as the morning broke, a long line of gray silently filed across a pontoon bridge thrown over a swift-flowing river. For two days those gray-coated veterans had been fighting for their existence, and the night had brought them no rest, for they were in retreat. Sullen, but grim and undaunted, they marched.

Two generals high in command sat on their horses watching the army as it filed over the swaying bridge. They had frowning batteries planted so as to beat back the Federals if they appeared.

Just as the sun arose, lighting up the scene, the last of the line had crossed. The batteries limbered up, and joined the moving columns.

Then one of the generals devoutly raised his eyes to heaven, and exclaimed: "Thank God, the danger is past. The army has been saved as by a miracle."

The speaker was Lieutenant-General Leonidas Polk. At the beginning of the war, though educated at West Point, he was a bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church. When the war-clouds gathered, he laid aside the gown and grasped his sword, and was now one of the most trusted of the Confederate generals.

The officer addressed was Lieutenant-General J. B. Hood, another of Johnston's corps commanders.

"It is indeed a miracle that we have escaped from a trap in which we should never have been placed," replied General Hood; "and we never would have escaped, if it had not been for my furious onslaught on the enemy yesterday. It made Sherman believe we were going to make a stand to the last. Now it is retreat again."

"You do not believe in retreating, I believe," said General Polk, with a faint smile.

"Only from such a cul-de-sac as the one from which we have just escaped, a position in which we never should have been placed. We should have assumed the offensive from Dalton. That is what I expected, and what I was told would be the programme when I accepted a command in this army. I should never have accepted it, if I had thought otherwise. It is now 'retreat, retreat,' when

I was told that 'advance' would be the motto of General Johnston. There can be but one end to this retreating—the discouragement and ultimate disintegration of the army."

"There is much that can be said on both sides," replied General Polk, musingly; "but I trust a decisive battle will be fought before long. Sherman in some of his movements must surely throw himself open to attack."



GENERAL JOHNSTON.

"Will such an opportunity be taken advantage of?" snapped Hood, spitefully.

"I sincerely trust so," responded Polk; and bidding General Hood good-day, he rode slowly away.

On the plain near Adairsville General Johnston marshaled his army for battle; but the position did not suit him, and he fell back toward Cassville.

In his pursuit General Sherman divided his army, each flank being separated from the center by an interval of from six to eight miles.

It was General Johnston's opportunity, and he attempted to turn it to his advantage. General Hood advised him to give battle near Adairsville, but Johnston thought it best to concentrate his army at Cassville and give battle at or near that place. He reasoned that after leaving Adairsville the Federal army would be more widely

divided than ever, and in this he reasoned correctly.

When he retreated from Adairsville he so managed it that General Sherman was led to believe that he had fallen back on Kingston, and Sherman moved his army with that understanding. Thus Johnston had his whole army massed against the extreme left, and could have thrown his entire force on the Army of the Ohio. He waited one day too long.

The evening of May 18th found the entire Confederate army massed before Cassville. General Johnston now announced his intention of giving battle, and issued an address to his soldiers to that effect. To General Hood he said:

“The time you have been looking for has come. Sherman’s army is divided. His left flank is his weakest point, and to you I give the post of responsibility. To-morrow advance your corps out on the Canton road, and as soon as you hear the roar of Polk’s guns, attack Schofield on flank and in rear. Strike swift and sure.”

The opportunity for which General Hood had been looking had come, but he utterly failed in the execution. After marching out about three miles, his flank was suddenly fired into by what Hood reported to be a large force of infantry, but which in reality was McCook’s brigade of cavalry.

Hood halted, changed front to the right, and engaged the cavalry, but he actually fell back a short distance. General Johnston waited in vain

for the sound of battle from Hood's front, and at last sent General Mackall, his chief of staff, to see why Hood had not attacked.

General Mackall found Hood's forces standing still, a slight skirmish being in progress on his right. Very much excited, General Mackall demanded of Hood why he had not kept pace with General Polk, so that that general could give battle.

General Hood pointed to his right, and said if he had advanced farther the enemy would have been in his rear.

While this was going on, General Hardee, who was in command of the Confederate left, advanced his corps in magnificent line of battle, and was suddenly confronted by the Fourth and Fourteenth Corps.

When General Mackall reported to Johnston the situation on the right, he saw that his whole plan of battle had miscarried, and he ordered his army back to their intrenchments in the rear of Cassville, intending to give battle the next day.

But that night there was a stormy scene at the Confederate headquarters. Generals Hood and Polk both reported that the positions assigned them in the intrenchments were untenable, owing to the fact that the Federal artillery had an enfilading fire on them.

"General Hood," remarked Johnston, sarcastically, "you are the general who has been so eager to fight, and who has criticised me so severely

because I have not risked a general engagement. Now that I propose to fight, you are the first of my generals to object."

"I believe," answered General Hood, haughtily, "in an offensive, not a defensive campaign."

"Why didn't you fight to-day, then, as I commanded? It was your failure to attack that brought my whole plan of battle to naught."

"This is the first time," tartly replied General Hood, "that I have had knowledge that you intended to fight a general engagement to-day. I asked and received your permission to attack. I had no knowledge of what your orders to the other corps commanders were."

"That is a strange statement, General Hood. Do you think I intended to let your corps fight the battle alone and unaided? But there will be no misunderstanding for to-morrow. I intend to fight."

"How, General?"

"By awaiting an attack in my intrenchments," was the reply of General Johnston.

"General Johnston," earnestly replied Hood, "I protest. I have told you—General Polk has told you—that our part of the line is enfiladed by the Federal artillery. There are portions of the line that cannot be held an hour. If you will let me attack in the morning, I will most willingly engage in battle; not otherwise."

With his voice trembling with emotion, General Johnston replied: "General Hood, the safety of

this army is intrusted to me. By morning the Federals will be strongly fortified. It would be madness to attack them. I cannot, will not, order it. General Hardee, what do you say?"

"That I can hold my line against any force the Yankees can bring against it," replied that bluff old soldier.

"And you, Generals Hood and Polk?"

"We are still of the opinion that we cannot hold our lines," was the answer of both.*

General Johnston mused a moment, and then said: "Gentlemen, I cannot engage in battle against the protest of two of my corps commanders. I shall at once order a retreat beyond the Etowah."

Let us now return to Fred and the Federal army.

The battle of Resaca was decidedly in favor of the Federals.

"If Johnston remains in his present position twenty-four hours longer," said General Thomas to his staff on the evening of the last day's fight, "the fate of his army is sealed."

"But will he stay?" asked his chief of staff.

"I am afraid not," answered Thomas; "but he put up a stiff fight to-day, and so far he has shown no signs of retreating to-night."

General Thomas's fears were well grounded, for, as we have seen, the Confederate army retreated

*These generals had good reasons for their fears, but General Johnston was right in refusing to attack the Federal intrenchments.

during the night—escaped, as General Polk said, as by a miracle. General Sherman lost no time in ordering a swift pursuit.

Early on the morning of the 16th General Thomas handed Fred a dispatch, saying, "Here is a dispatch which I wish delivered to General Jefferson C. Davis as soon as possible."

It was an order for General Davis to take his division, make a detour to the right, and then march directly on Rome. Thus General Sherman was deprived for the time of this division, numbering at least seven thousand men.

In the pursuit of the Confederate army Fred and his scouts were continually at the front trying to gain information of Johnston's intentions.

"From what I can learn," reported Fred to General Thomas, "I believe Johnston intends making a stand a little this side of Adairsville. I know he has concentrated his whole army. From the top of a tall tree on the summit of a hill I was enabled, by the aid of my glass, to scan the country in front pretty thoroughly. There is a heavy line of breastworks thrown up across the entire valley, but the country is open on the left, and the position can easily be flanked."

Just then there came the sound of conflict, and General Thomas rode to the front, and found that the rear guard of the retreating army was making a stubborn stand, and it was dark before they were driven from their position.

That night the army was concentrated before

Adairsville in expectation of the coming battle, but when morning came it was found that the enemy had again retreated.

Everything indicated that the main body of the Confederates had fallen back on Kingston, and General Sherman advanced his army with that understanding. Kingston lies south of Adairsville, while Cassville lies southeast.

Fred came to General Thomas and said: "General, everything indicates that the main body of the Confederates has fallen back on Cassville, instead of Kingston. If this is true, it brings Schofield in grave danger, for he will be confronted by the entire rebel army."

"What makes you think Johnston fell back on Cassville instead of Kingston?" asked the general.

"Because everything shows that great pains were taken to make the trail leading to Kingston as broad and as plain as possible. Then I find by consulting the map that the railroad turns and runs directly east from Kingston, and by making a stand at that place Johnston would expose his railroad communications to a flank attack. For these reasons I believe Johnston's army is at Cassville instead of Kingston."

So impressed was General Thomas by what Fred said that after consultation with General Sherman he ordered General Hooker to move on the direct road from Adairsville to Cassville, thus placing him in supporting distance of Schofield.

"Dick," said Fred to his lieutenant, Dick Dar-

ling, "if General Johnston ever expects to fight a general engagement, to-day is his opportunity. The way the army is moving, the Army of the Tennessee would be entirely out of the fight. McPherson would be at least twelve or fourteen miles from where the battle would be fought. For some hours Schofield and Hooker would have to bear the brunt of the attack alone."

"Then you think if Johnston attacks, it will be on our left flank?" asked Darling.

"Of course; where else could he attack, with his army at Cassville?"

"Well, I reckon Schofield and Fighting Joe would hold Johnston level until Sherman could get the rest of us there," answered Darling.

And that is just what Sherman thought. So eager was he for battle that he was willing to take some risks.

But the day passed without battle, and the night found General Thomas within four miles of Kingston, and Schofield about eight miles from Cassville.

The next morning, the 19th of May, General Thomas's advance entered Kingston, skirmishing briskly with the enemy. Now it was known that Fred's surmises were correct, and that the Confederate army was at Cassville.

Making a left wheel, General Thomas marched his army directly for Cassville. For two miles his soldiers had to force their way through a thick jungle, and their progress was slow. Coming out

of the wood, a broad extensive plain opened up in view. Here a sight met the gaze of the soldiers which caused the blood to leap through their veins. Before them lay one of the most beautiful portions of Georgia. For miles the undulating plain stretched out before them, smiling in verdure, rich with growing grain. But it was not on the landscape the soldiers gazed. Two miles before them stood the Confederate army drawn up in magnificent battle array; and as they looked, that army commenced advancing as steadily as if on parade.

Fred sat on his horse fascinated by the sight. Was a battle to be fought on this open plain, where the movements of armies could be seen, and military genius win the day?

Already the skirmishers were engaged, and Fred rode forward with his scouts, his quick eye scanning the field in his front. He greatly desired to capture some prisoners to see if he could learn the meaning of the battle array before him. He noticed a slight depression in the ground, which led through, then behind the Confederate skirmish-line, nearly paralleling it. Fred saw that by a quick dash he might be able to cut off some of the skirmishers, and giving a sharp word of command, he led his little company directly toward the enemy's lines.

"Thunder!" exclaimed Captain Hugh Raymond, who was again in command of the Federal skirmishers; "it's that dare-devil Shackelford. He is going to charge the whole rebel army."

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ABOUT FIFTEEN OR TWENTY FOUND THEMSELVES CUT OFF

Then it flashed upon Hugh what Fred was trying to do. "Boys," he cried, "he is going to try to cut off those rebel skirmishers on that rise of ground. We can help him. Charge!" and with a ringing cheer, Hugh and his men dashed forward.

There was a crackling and sputtering of musketry, and then the Confederate picket-line was in full retreat. But about fifteen or twenty found themselves cut off by Fred and his men, and they threw down their arms and cried for quarter.

"Well done, Fred," shouted Hugh, after the little skirmish was over. "You took those fellows in nicely out of the wet."

Dismounting, Fred gave his hand to Hugh, saying: "I want to thank you, Captain, for your opportune help. It saved me from serious loss and made my task easy. But let us see what we have learned, and what we can learn. Sergeant," to one of his men, "bring that captain here," and he pointed to one of the prisoners who wore a captain's bars on his collar.

The sergeant did as commanded. "Captain," asked Fred, politely, "can you tell me the meaning of this array before us? Does it mean a battle?"

"You will find out soon enough without my telling you," replied the captain, surlily.

"Sergeant, search him," said Fred; "return all his private property, but see if you cannot find something that may enlighten us."

The captain protested against his person being

searched, but that did not prevent the sergeant from going carefully through his pockets.

“There is nothing, Captain,” at last exclaimed the sergeant, “unless it is this little folded paper which I found in his pocketbook.”

“Give him back everything else, and let me see the paper.”

Fred took the paper, unfolded it, and a prolonged “Whew!” escaped him as he glanced at it. This is what Fred read:

General Orders }
No. —. }

HEADQUARTERS,
ARMY OF TENNESSEE,
CASSVILLE, GA., May 19, 1864.

Soldiers of the Army of Tennessee, you have displayed the highest qualities of the soldier—firmness in combat, patience under toil. By your courage and skill you have repulsed every assault of the enemy. By marches by day and by marches by night, you have defeated every attempt upon your communications. Your communications are secured. You will now turn and march to meet his advancing columns. Fully confiding in the conduct of the officers, the courage of the soldiers, I lead you to battle.

We may confidently trust that the Almighty Father will still reward the patriots' toils, and bless the patriots' banner. Cheered by the success of our brothers in Virginia and beyond the Mississippi, our efforts will equal theirs. Strengthened by this support, those efforts will be crowned with the like glories.

J. E. JOHNSTON, General.

“That means fight,” muttered Fred; and mounting Prince, he was off like an arrow for General Thomas.

“Read this, please, General! Johnston intends to fight,” Fred breathlessly exclaimed, placing Johnston's proclamation in the general's hands.

General Thomas read the proclamation through carefully, and then said: "Captain, this is good news; it is just what General Sherman desires; but the army should be concentrated as quickly as possible. Take this order to General Sherman as quickly as your horse will carry you. You will find him at Kingston."

"But, General, how about this force in front?"

General Thomas glanced toward the Confederate lines. "I see they have halted. I think that display is made to attract our attention, while the real attack will be made on the left. Tell General Sherman he need have no fear of the center."

A moment more and Prince was racing for Kingston, and as Fred rode he heard the roar of Thomas's cannon as they opened on the enemy.

General Sherman was just remarking to one of his staff, "From the sound of his artillery, General Thomas must have found the enemy," when Fred dashed up.

The general's face lighted up as he read Johnston's boastful words. A battle was just what he desired. "Where did you get this, Captain?" asked the general, after he had finished reading the proclamation. Fred gave him the particulars.

"Well done, Captain. A word with you in a moment."

Then turning to his aides, he gave them some orders, and soon they were riding as for life to McPherson, to Hooker, to Schofield, with orders to close up on Thomas, and with further orders to

Schofield and Hooker to be prepared for an attack in force. After he had given his orders, General Sherman said to Fred: "I wish to congratulate you, Captain, on your work since you have been with the army. I don't know but I shall yet have to steal you from General Thomas. You have a knack of getting information none of my scouts seem to have. You say the enemy appear to be in force in General Thomas's front."



GENERAL SCHOFIELD.

"It is no mere appearance, General; they are in force. I saw them myself, and it was a magnificent and glorious sight, even if it was the Confederate army. Their lines looked nearly two miles long, and as perfect as though on parade."

"I think General Thomas must be driving them," said Sherman, after listening a moment. "The sound of the cannonading seems to be farther away, and I hear no answering guns. You can tell General Thomas I will have General McPherson up on his right as soon as possible, and tell him to render all aid needful to Schofield and Hooker if they are attacked."

Fred saluted, and turning, gave Prince free rein, and in less than half an hour he was once more with his chieftain. But the scene had completely changed while he was gone. There was no enemy in sight, but as far as the eye could reach long lines

of blue were sweeping forward over the field, their bright arms flashing in the sunlight, their banners waving. Upon an elevation stood twenty pieces of artillery, shelling the woods beyond the plain into which the Confederate army had disappeared. The rolling smoke from the cannon and their thunderous notes added grandeur to the scene.

Fred stopped Prince and gazed upon the grand panorama before him. It spoke of the pomp, the glories of war. The long lines of men, the glistening arms, the waving flags, the smoke of the artillery made a picture Fred never forgot.

Slowly the Confederates were pressed back through the woods, and by night they were in their fortifications in the rear of Cassville. Not a soldier in Sherman's army but expected a great battle on the morrow. But when morning came, there was no foe. The Etowah, south of Cassville, flowed between the two armies, and the great battle was never fought.*

*General Johnston lost the best opportunity of the campaign in not giving battle on the 18th or 19th near Adairsville or before Cassville. He had just been reinforced by French's division of infantry, as well as a brigade of cavalry. His army numbered over seventy thousand men. The Federal army, owing to its losses at Resaca and the absence of General Jefferson C. Davis's division, did not number quite ninety thousand, so the armies would not have been as unequal in number as at the battle of Gettysburg. If the two armies had met on the open plain near Cassville, it would have been the greatest conflict of the war. It was always a matter of regret to General Johnston that he did not fight the battle. Cassville gave rise to a most bitter controversy between Johnston and Hood.

CHAPTER V.

TRANSFERRED TO SHERMAN'S STAFF.

THE Federal army halted at Cassville for three days for a much needed rest. During the movement on Cassville, General Jefferson C. Davis had been eminently successful in his movement on Rome, capturing the city, with its immense iron foundries and machine-shops. Six cannon and immense quantities of cotton and military stores also fell into his hands. The foundries and machine-shops were burned. General Davis rested at Rome for three or four days, then moving southeast through Van Wert, he joined Sherman's army at Dallas.

On the evening of the second day's halt at Cassville, as Fred came in from an extended scout along the banks of the Etowah, an official document was handed to him. To his surprise, he found it an order from General Sherman relieving him from duty on the staff of General Thomas and requiring him to report to him. Much exercised, he sought General Thomas, and asked him the meaning of the order.

"Captain Shackelford," kindly replied General Thomas, "it simply means a step higher—that

instead of having the command of my scouts and spies only, you will be in charge of the whole secret service of the army. I regret to lose you from my staff, but both General Sherman and myself agree that it will be the best for the service that you report to the general-in-chief and be under his direct command. I shall still have the benefit of your knowledge, and your advanced position will enable you to increase that knowledge."

"But, General, I don't want to leave you," said Fred, in a quivering voice.

"Captain," replied General Thomas, "neither you nor I is his own master. A soldier has but one duty—to obey. He should be inspired but by one passion—the love of country. Wherever you are, under the command of whatever general it may be your lot to serve, I know you will do your full duty. Now go, and may God bless you."

Fred's heart was full as he mounted Prince and rode slowly away. It was like breaking home ties to leave General Thomas. Wending his way to General Sherman's headquarters, he received a warm welcome, and at once was made to feel at home.

He noticed that the discipline around the headquarters of the commanding general was not so strict as around the headquarters of General Thomas. The staff officers talked together more freely, and did not hesitate to criticise, if they so desired, the merits or demerits of different generals.

The next morning Fred was summoned to a private interview with General Sherman, who, as

General Thomas had intimated, gave him a position on his staff, and placed him at the head of the whole secret service of the army. It was a proud position for one so young as Fred.

"You are young for so responsible a position," said the general, "but I have carefully watched your actions and conduct, and I believe you fully capable. Remember that there may be times that I will act entirely on the information you give me; thus, in a measure, you may hold the fortunes of the campaign in your hands."

"General," slowly answered Fred, "I fully realize the responsibility you place upon me, and I hope to prove worthy of your confidence."

"I know you will," responded the general. "Now to business. You thoroughly scouted the bank of the Etowah to-day, did you not?"

"Yes, General."

"I shall find no trouble in crossing, shall I?"

"Not at any point below Cartersville."

"How many spies have you in the Confederate lines now?"

"Three. Green should have reported several days ago. I am afraid he is in trouble. Stribbling I only sent out to-day. Delaney has been gone a week. I ordered him to go as far south as Macon, if possible. But, General, I find that spies in a campaign like this are of little value. The information they bring is generally so old that it is of no use. I find that my scouts are of far more value. They are daring fellows, and by hanging

around the outskirts of the Confederate army and passing themselves off as rebels, it is wonderful how much information they manage to pick up. The citizens, especially the women, are perfect gold mines. All my boys are good-looking, and are adepts in getting into the good graces of the Southern women! The rebel officers give away many a valuable secret to good-looking girls, and it doesn't take my boys long to learn all that they know."

The general leaned back in his chair and laughed heartily. "So," he exclaimed, "that is your secret, is it? I have wondered what it was. I now see why you will accept only young, good-looking men on your force."

"It pays, General; but I understand you move to-morrow."

"Yes; and this is what I wish to talk about. Johnston is in the Allatoona mountains, thinking I am likely to move that way. But if I do, it is so far east it would uncover my lines of communications, to say nothing of the fearfully rough country I should have to move over, thus giving Johnston a great advantage. Instead of following Johnston, I intend to move by the way of Dallas, and if possible strike Johnston's communications at Big Shanty or Marietta. By doing so, I shall completely flank his position at Allatoona, and force him to give battle or fall back to the Chattahoochee. But the country I shall have to march over before reaching Dallas is wooded, rough, almost mountain-

ous. It is a country in which scouting will be dangerous, and in which it will be almost impossible to detect the movements of the enemy. It is important that I learn at the earliest possible moment when Johnston becomes apprised of my movement. This is what I wish you to find out. It is a dangerous undertaking. Do not be rash, but get the information if possible. One thing more,—don't be drawn into a fight if you can possibly avoid it."

"We are never rash, General, and never fight when we can run. My scouts are all splendidly mounted, and depend more on the fleetness of their horses than on their own bravery."

The general smiled. "It is very essential to run sometimes," he answered; "but from all reports, Captain Shackelford sometimes fights when he ought to run."

"Never as a scout, General. I should not be a good one if I preferred fighting to running."

"Well, Captain, I shall depend a great deal on you. May your first scout in your new position be a successful one." And Fred was dismissed.

On the 23d of May, General Sherman moved his whole army across the Etowah, and headed for Dallas.

Along in the afternoon Fred and a small party of his scouts dressed in Confederate uniform ventured beyond the Federal advance. Fred found the country all that General Sherman had said, a succession of rough, wooded hills, and very sparsely settled. It was necessary to move with

the utmost caution. The few inhabitants met were very ignorant, and seemed to know little about the war, much less of the whereabouts of Johnston's army. They had seen a few "critter solgers," as they called the cavalry, but it was only in small parties.

After an hour's ride they approached a hamlet called Burnt Hickory. Reconnoitering carefully, they discovered that it was occupied only by a small cavalry vidette post, and Fred decided to ride boldly into it. They found it held by a sergeant, with half a dozen men under his command.

"Who air yo-uns?" asked the sergeant, as they trotted gaily up, that official being greatly impressed with their fine horses and handsome uniforms.

"Scouts of General Johnston," answered Fred. "Any Yankees about?"

"No; but one of our men from below cum through heah a little while ago and said a right smart heap of Yanks had crossed the rivah and was makin' for Van Wert."

"Indeed," answered Fred. "We are on our way to find General Jackson* now, with dispatches from General Johnston instructing him to be on the lookout for that very movement."

"Well, the general is down to'ard Van Wert," answered the sergeant. "We-uns belong to his command."

Just then a courier on a reeking horse rode up

*General W. H. Jackson, a Confederate general of cavalry.

from the direction of Allatoona, and inquired for the whereabouts of General Jackson.

"He is on the extreme left flank, down toward Van Wert," answered Fred.

"That far," said the courier; "that is a long ride, but I must find him, as I have important dispatches for him from General Johnston. And what is more, one of your fellows must let me have a fresh horse. Here is an order to that effect," and he produced a paper.

"Yo-uns frum General Johnston, too," said the sergeant. "Why, these fellers say they air the general's scouts."

The courier gave Fred and his party a quick, sharp glance, and made a motion as if to grasp his revolver, but Fred's revolver was shoved in his face, with a command to surrender, and each of the Confederates found himself covered by a pistol in the hands of a scout. A more amazed set of men were never seen.

"Surrender!" demanded Fred; "we are Yankees."

"The Confederates dropped their arms without a word, still too surprised to speak.

"Here, none of that," commanded Fred, as he noticed the courier trying to make away with a paper. "Another movement like that and you are a dead man. Give me that dispatch."

Trembling in every limb and with a face as pale as death, the courier handed Fred the dispatch. Hastily tearing open the envelope, Fred read:

GENERAL W. H. JACKSON,

Commanding Cavalry, Left Flank:

Sherman's whole army has crossed the Etowah, and is moving on Dallas. My army is on the move to head him off. When you retreat, retire on Dallas, but dispute every foot of ground.

J. E. JOHNSTON, General.

"Ah, ha!" exclaimed Fred; "that old fox Johnston has discovered Sherman's flank movement already. The general must know of this. Boys, marshal the prisoners; we will not return empty-handed, anyway."

It was a crestfallen-looking squad of Confederates that were made to mount their own horses and accompany the scouts back to the Federal lines.

When General Sherman read Johnston's dispatch, he merely remarked: "It was almost too much to hope for, but I wish Johnston had been twelve hours later in finding this out. As it is, I must try to secure the cross-roads at New Hope Church before he does." And he sent orders to Hooker, who had the advance, to hurry and reach the cross-roads, if possible, before Johnston did. Then the general turned to Fred, and warmly complimented him on what he had done.

"Well," said Fred, "if we did nothing else, we depleted the rebel army by eight men, and without any loss."

"Eight to nothing," replied the general, with a comical look; "that is seeing Johnston and going him one better. In his dispatches to the Confederate government he claims to have killed eight of my men to my one of his."

“Does he claim that?”

“Surely. He has to make some showing to his government.”

“Well, if he gets the Confederate authorities to believe that, they are easily imposed upon,” answered Fred, as he bade the general good day.

Although General Hooker made all haste possible, he did not reach New Hope Church until the evening of the 25th, and he found General Hood there before him. Hooker at once assaulted Hood, and one of the fiercest minor battles of the campaign took place. But General Hooker was bloodily repulsed in the conflict, losing nearly two thousand men.

By the next morning the two armies were concentrated and confronting each other once more in battle array.

In scouting to the left, Fred discovered that in his hurry to concentrate his force at Dallas, General Johnston's right flank was in air. This fact Fred reported to General Sherman, and the general determined to try to turn it. For this purpose General Thomas J. Wood's division of the Fourth Corps was selected. General R. W. Johnson's division of the Fourteenth Corps was to protect the left flank of Wood, while the duty of protecting his right flank was assigned to McLean's brigade of Haskell's division of the Army of the Ohio. The whole was in command of General O. O. Howard. Fred was to act as guide to the movement.

Owing to the thick woods and dense thickets,

the progress of the moving column was slow. Fred found great difficulty to persuade the generals to move far enough to the left. Against his protest they halted and formed their assaulting columns, and advanced only to find that the Confederate breastworks extended far to their left. So they withdrew, and this time marched to where Fred indicated. But valuable time had been lost, and it was four o'clock in the afternoon before the column was ready to move forward again. After marching some distance and not finding the enemy, the column performed a right wheel, changing the direction from the south to the west.



GENERAL HOWARD.

Again Fred protested, averring that the movement would bring them in front of the extreme right of the enemy, instead of on their flank and rear. But the protest was unheeded. This movement, as Fred predicted, brought the assaulting columns in front of the Confederate extreme right. During the conflict Fred acted as volunteer aide on the staff of General Howard. The conflict was a terrific one, and would have been successful, if Wood had been properly supported. The brigade of General W. B. Hazen led the charge, and reached the Confederate breastwork; but receiving no support and subjected to a severe cross-fire, Hazen had to fall back. General Wood's other brigades were

thrown in, one after the other, but both were bloodily repulsed.

General R. W. Johnson's division, which should have protected Wood's left flank, received a volley from Wheeler's cavalry, and halted. This gave Wheeler an opportunity of attacking Wood on his left flank, and it was owing to this terrible enfilading fire that the charge was a failure.

General McLean, on the right, failed to show himself to the enemy at all. Thus both flanks of the charging column were exposed. After two hours of terrible fighting, Wood's division was forced to fall back, with a loss of nearly a third of its numbers. Both General Howard and General W. R. Johnson were slightly wounded during the battle.*

Fred witnessed the outcome of this conflict with the deepest anguish; he felt, he knew, that if rightly managed, it would have been a great success. It was with a heavy heart that he rode back through the darkness of the night to make his report to General Sherman. He it was that had reported to General Sherman that the attack was possible and promised success. Would the general hold him responsible for the hundreds of brave men fallen? As he thought of the dead lying in the woods, uncoffined and uncared for, of the wounded

*It is strange that General Sherman, in his "Memoirs," never alludes to this battle; yet it was the bloodiest conflict fought by any single division during the Atlanta campaign. Wood's loss was fifteen hundred, nearly as great as the loss in both Newton's and Davis's divisions, which made the famous charge on Kenesaw a month later. General Sherman also seems to ignore entirely his loss in this battle, for in his "Memoirs" he places the loss of the army of the Cumberland during the month of May at 6,856. In reality it was nearly nine thousand.

with their life-blood oozing away, he gave a great sob, and cried out in the agony of his heart.

So different was he from his usual self when he came into the presence of General Sherman, that the general kindly asked him if he was wounded.

"No, General," was his answer, "only in spirit. What I reported to you as promising a grand success has turned out a miserable failure."

"I have heard that the movement failed," replied the general; "tell me all about it."

So Fred gave the general a clear and succinct history of the whole affair, and ended with: "General, I can never forgive myself for reporting to you that this movement promised success. When I think of the hundreds of brave men uselessly sacrificed I am nearly beside myself. Yet I never saw a braver charge, and cannot help feeling that if properly managed it might have been a grand victory."

General Sherman looked at Fred with a strange expression in his eye, one of gentleness, of sympathy, and then he said, a little huskily: "Captain, how do you suppose I feel when I order a great charge, and then find I have sacrificed my men for nothing? You did right in making your report as you did. Like you, I believed it promised great results. It is not your fault that it failed. What is broken cannot be mended. We must try again."

Fred went from the presence of General Sherman comforted; but as he went, he thought he heard the general say, as if to himself: "Hooker repulsed

day before yesterday; Wood to-day. We must do better."

For a week the Dallas woods were the theater of a continuous battle. Through the thickets and underbrush the two armies struggled, and the whole forest was rent and torn with balls. General Davis's division reported back from Rome during this time. Take it all together, the week in these woods was the most unfortunate part of Sherman's Atlanta campaign.

But there came some compensation. On the 28th, General Sherman ordered McPherson to transfer the Army of the Tennessee from the right to the left of the army. General Hardee detected the movement, and assaulted the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Corps as they were about to move out of their works. Everywhere the assaulting columns were hurled back with heavy loss, and thus the failures of New Hope Church and Pickett's Mill were partially compensated.

A couple of days after this the pickets of the two armies exchanged papers, and Fred learned from one of them that his Uncle Charles Shackelford, who commanded a regiment in the Confederate army, had been desperately wounded in the assault on McPherson. Colonel Shackelford was the father of Kate Shackelford, a favorite cousin of Fred's, and the paragraph as he read it gave him the keenest pain, for well he knew the agony it would cause those whom he loved.

From the same paper Fred learned that his

father had been promoted to the command of a division; and although they were arrayed against each other, he rejoiced in the honor conferred upon him.

During the first week in June, Sherman flanked Johnston on the left, secured the possession of Allatoona Pass, and Johnston was once more forced to fall back before the onward march of General Sherman's victorious army.

CHAPTER VI.

KENESAW.

IN the great stretch of country covered by General Sherman in his campaign against Atlanta there is one landmark which will ever remain the same. Time cannot obliterate it, the hand of man cannot greatly change it—Kenesaw Mountain. It stands now as it stood when Sherman's cannon thundered around it, and the Confederate army hurled defiance from its rocky heights. The soldier who fought along its rugged sides still recognizes the spot, and stands with uncovered head on the place where some loved comrade fell. Its rocks and woods, its tangled thickets and deep ravines, are engraved on his memory as with a pen of iron. He finds the very rocks behind which he took shelter from the leaden hail of death which swept around him. Here was the rifle-pit over which he charged with such desperation.

Kenesaw now lies all calm and peaceful; above it birds wheel and circle; around it the song of the husbandman is heard at his daily toil. Forgotten are those bloody days of 1864.

The fierce fighting in the Dallas woods had ceased. The Confederates had been pressed back

from Pine Mountain, where General Polk gave up his life, and the middle of June found Sherman's army before Kenesaw.

As Fred stood and looked at its rocky heights, his heart sank, for before him he saw a mountain almost as impregnable as Rocky Face. For two weeks the roar of battle around Kenesaw ceased for hardly a moment. There were fields which were literally plowed with cannon-balls. The forests were scarred and torn as by a tornado.

On the 22d of June, Fred was sent with orders to Generals Hooker and Schofield to extend their lines to the right, and then advance and try to turn the Confederate left.

"Dick," said Fred to Darling, after they had delivered their dispatches, "let's stay and see the movement. I believe this will bring on a fight."

"See it!" answered Darling. "Did any one ever know you to see a fight without having a hand in it?"

"Not so bad as that, Dick; but I confess it's hard to keep out of a skirmish when one is going on."

The two scouts rode out to the front, where the skirmish-line was slowly forcing the Confederates back. The firing amounted to a small battle.

"Look a here," exclaimed a soldier who had just taken a shot, and was now standing behind a tree loading his gun, "you two fellers will get knocked over if you come fooling around here on horseback. What did I tell you?" he continued,

as a ball went through Darling's hat, just grazing his head.

"I reckon we had better be getting out of this, Captain," coolly replied Darling, as he took off his hat and looked at it; "there is a good hat spoiled."

Just then the skirmish-line charged and drove the enemy from a low wooded hill in front, leaving Fred and Dick in comparative safety.

"Dick," said Fred, "let us leave our horses here and mount that hill. I notice some good-sized trees on it, and by climbing one we may be able to see what is out in front."

"All right," responded Darling; and a soldier having been called to hold their horses, they carefully made their way to where the skirmishers were.

"Here is a good tree to climb," said Fred, pointing to one; "the leaves are thick, and they will serve admirably as a screen."

"Yes," replied Darling; "but the bullets seem to be coming pretty thick through it, all the same. But never mind, Captain, it's my turn to climb this time." And before Fred could object, Darling had commenced climbing the tree, first telling a soldier who stood behind it loading his gun to get out of his way.

The soldier looked at him with the utmost scorn as he commenced climbing, and ejaculated: "You blamed fool, you deserve to be shot. Darned if I will bury you if you are."

"Don't worry, my good man," laughed back Darling; "you may get shot first, after all."

Hardly were the words out of Darling's mouth before a ball took the soldier in the arm, and he went howling back to the rear.

Darling had not climbed more than half-way up the tree when a shower of balls swept through its branches, and only the trunk which was between him and the enemy saved him from being killed or severely wounded. As it was, he fairly came tumbling to the ground. But he had had one look, and that was enough.

"Captain," he gasped, "they are forming by thousands and thousands in front; they are going to charge."

Rushing back to where their horses were, they quickly rode to Hooker and Schofield, telling them of the impending danger. They, in turn, informed their division commanders, who scarcely had time to make their preparations when the storm burst. It was Hood's Corps which composed the charging column, and they came on with all the impetuosity of that fiery commander.

For over an hour the battle raged, but not once did the Federal line waver; and at last the Confederates fell back, losing between one and two thousand men in killed and wounded.

"Oh, that was glorious! glorious!" cried Fred, as the roar of battle died away to the spiteful crackling of the skirmish-line.

"Indeed it was glorious," answered Darling. "I wouldn't have missed it for anything. Hurrah for Hooker and Schofield, I say!"

This action is known as the battle of Culp's Farm.

Just as Fred and Darling were preparing to return, General Hooker rode up to them, and said, rather pompously: "I wish you would report to General Sherman that I have just repulsed a charge made by all three corps of the rebel army. Also, that I was left to fight the battle by myself, Schofield not giving me any support upon my right. The valor of my soldiers alone enabled me to gain a great victory."

Upon Fred's return, he gave the message to General Sherman as Hooker gave it to him, and then said:

"General, I think General Hooker is mistaken in one thing. I saw the battle, and all that General Hooker says about the valor of the soldiers is true. Never once did they waver; but he was supported upon the right by General Schofield, and most gallantly supported. In fact, Haskell's division of Schofield's corps was heavily engaged. That division and Williams's division of Hooker's corps bore the brunt of the fighting. I think General Hooker must have taken Haskell's division for one of his own."

"How about his fighting all three corps of the rebel army?" asked the general.

"I know nothing about that," answered Fred; "the charge was made by a heavy force; but if all three corps charged him, I don't see what is in front of us."

“Nor do I,” answered the general. Yet the report troubled him, for McPherson, Howard, and Palmer all reported that the enemy seemed as strong as ever in their front.

But so astonishing was General Hooker’s assertion that he had fought the whole of the Confederate army, and had not been properly supported by Schofield, that General Sherman himself rode over to the right to investigate.

When General Schofield learned what Hooker had reported, his indignation knew no bounds. He pointed out to General Sherman his position on the field, showed his dead, still unburied, that lay full as far to the front as Hooker’s, and declared that the loss in Haskell’s division was as great as in Williams’s division of Hooker’s Corps. He also stated that as far as he knew the charge was made by Hood’s corps alone, although some of the prisoners reported that some of Hardee’s corps were in the charge, but he knew of none of Hardee’s men being taken prisoners.

The result was that General Hooker was severely reprimanded by General Sherman, and given to understand that such statements must not be made again. From that day Hooker was a dissatisfied man. Having once commanded the Army of the Potomac, no doubt he was annoyed at his present subordinate position.

On the 27th of June came the great charge on Kenesaw. To the Army of the Tennessee was given the task of storming the mountain, while the

Army of the Cumberland was to charge to the right, on ground which, though rough, was not precipitous like the mountain. General Jefferson C. Davis's division of the Fourteenth Army Corps, and General Newton's division of the Fourth Corps were selected as the storming columns in the Army of the Cumberland.

At half-past eight in the morning a hundred and fifty cannon opened on the Confederate lines. But the fire was not concentrated on any given point, and did little damage.

The charge, which was made in spite of a strong protest from General Thomas, proved a bloody failure, and three thousand men fell in the vain attempt to pierce the Confederate lines. Among those who fell mortally wounded were General C. G. Harker, a young brigadier of much promise, and Colonel Daniel McCook, one of the famous McCook brothers.

The failure of the charge was a source of the deepest disappointment to General Sherman, but he made no complaint—though he gives a very inadequate and curious apology for the charge in his personal memoirs—and found no fault, and not for a moment did he relax his efforts. To the soldiers the repulse was even a greater disappointment than it was to the general. They were both angry and mortified because they had failed to accomplish the impossible, and were disposed to find fault with the way the charge was managed.

A short time after the repulse, Fred met his

friend Captain Hugh Raymond. Hugh was wild with rage and mortification, and had lost all of his levity.

"I gained the works," he said to Fred, "and for a moment stood on the parapet. We had their fire nearly silenced in front, but the deadly fire from both flanks mowed my men down like grain. I tell you, if we had charged with a long front, as we did at Missionary Ridge, we could have carried the works. Oh, it was a terrible mistake, a terrible mistake!"

"Be thankful, Hugh, you are safe and unhurt," said Fred. "Think of the hundreds who have fallen. And Hugh, look! the woods are on fire, and many of the wounded are perishing."

Hugh shuddered, and then remarked petulantly: "Don't talk to me; don't tell me what is happening; I have seen horror enough for one day. Go and talk to Colonel Ainsworth there; he is almost broken-hearted; he looks as if he hadn't a friend left in the world."

Colonel Ainsworth was well known to Fred.* He found the colonel sitting on a log, his face buried in his hands.

"Colonel," said Fred.

Colonel Ainsworth looked up, and when he saw Fred, a wan smile flitted across his face.

"Is it you, Captain?" he said. "I am glad to see you. It is not for myself I am feeling badly; it's my poor boys. My poor boys! Captain, half

*See "On General Thomas's Staff."

of my regiment is gone. I almost wish I were among those who fell."

"Oh, Colonel, cheer up! I was in hopes this charge would put a star on your shoulder. But think of poor Harker and McCook, and rejoice that you are alive."

"They at least fell gloriously, while I am left with a decimated regiment. There is no star for me, nor will there be."

"You will win a star yet, before the campaign is over, see if you don't, Colonel," answered Fred.

Colonel Ainsworth shook his head. "There is no star for me," he replied. "But this will not do; my boys who remain must not see me moping."

There was many an officer that day who looked upon his depleted regiment or company with a sad heart, and General Thomas mourned for his men needlessly slaughtered."

The day after the charge, an orderly rode up to Fred, and said, "The general would like to see you, Captain."

Fred found General Sherman busily engaged poring over some maps. Seeing Fred, he exclaimed, "Prompt as usual, Captain, I see."

He then explained that since the charge was a failure, his only recourse was to flank Johnston out of his position again. "This," said he, "I wish to do by extending my right flank. But it has been almost impossible for me to gain correct information of the country to the west and south; I find my maps very incorrect. I wish to know the exact

distance to the Chattahoochee River, whether its fords and ferries are guarded, and the condition of the roads. In fact, I want you to reconnoiter from the left of the enemy's lines to the river, and gain all the knowledge possible of the topography of the country. I am aware, Captain, I am assigning you a dangerous duty, but the information I desire is so necessary to the success of my next movement that I ask you if you are willing to undertake it. Remember, it is not a command. If you refuse, I cannot blame you."

"To refuse a request from you, General," answered Fred, "would be as criminal as to disobey a command. To face danger, if need be to die, is the duty of a soldier. I gladly accept the duty you assign to me, and will do the best I can."

"Spoken like a soldier, Captain; and may success attend you. Take as many men as you wish."

Fred well knew that the duty required of him could not be undertaken except in Confederate guise. So he and twenty brave and true men donned the Confederate uniform and rode away on their dangerous mission. Fred knew the organization of the Confederate army more thoroughly than most of the Confederate officers. He was especially well posted in regard to the Kentucky Confederate cavalry regiments, knowing the names not only of the regimental, but also of the company officers. It was thus easy for him to pass himself off as an officer belonging to one of those regiments. With his little company he rode to the rear of the Union

army some three or four miles before he turned south.

They then went several miles before they met with any of the enemy, and those they met were either foraging or scouting parties, that did not seem a bit curious as to who they were. They were fortunate enough to reach the Chattahoochee River at the crossing of the Sandtown road. Fred found the crossing guarded by a regiment of the Georgia State Guards. Representing himself as on a tour of inspection, he found no difficulty in finding out all that the officers knew.

Elated with his success, he concluded to keep up the river until he came to the Lickskillet road. This would bring him dangerously near to the main lines of the enemy. He met several detachments of cavalry, to all of whom he rendered satisfactory evidence of his business and where he belonged, and in return obtained information of the utmost value.

“Now, boys,” he said, “for our lines; we have have had glorious luck, and will run no more risks.”

When he said this he little thought that in a few minutes half of his little company would be lying cold in death, and that he himself would escape instant death only by the timely help of a comrade.

They had ridden but a short distance after Fred had spoken so cheerfully, when to their consternation they ran into a regiment of Confederate cavalry. Fred saw at a glance that they were Kentucky

troops. He would have to be careful; it would not do now to belong to a Kentucky regiment.

“What command is this, Captain?” asked a major of Fred, as they met in the road and exchanged salutations.

“A detachment of the Twelfth Mississippi, acting under orders from General Loring,” answered Fred, he being aware that the Twelfth Mississippi was used principally for scouting purposes.

Not a man in the party but knew that a single false move meant death, yet there was not a tremor, not a single glance of fear. Fred soon became aware that there was a full brigade of cavalry in his front. If discovered, there were no hopes of breaking through. He glanced around; on the left there was a meadow inclosed by a fence.

There were a number of the Confederate cavalry between his men and the fence, but if detected, a break for that field would be the only hope. Fred looked back, as if carelessly, at his little company, and then cast a quick glance out over the field, wheeling his horse a trifle at the same time. There was not one of his scouts but understood, and little by little began to turn their horses' heads toward the field.

“You are kept on scouting duty most of the time, are you not?” asked the major.

“Yes,” answered Fred.

“Anything new from the Yanks?”

“I picked up a prisoner this morning—an intelligent fellow, he appeared to be. He reported

that their army was greatly discouraged over the result of the assault on Kenesaw Monday. Said it was the common report that they lost at least ten thousand men; some regiments were completely annihilated; and that the soldiers declared they would mutiny before they would be led against our breastworks again."

The major beamed with delight. "Good!" he exclaimed; "that's glorious news. We will give them all they want before we get through with them. General Johnston has old Sherman now just where he wants him. Ah! there comes our colonel; he will be glad to talk with you."

Fred looked up. His heart stood still, the cold sweat started out on his forehead. The colonel was at the beginning of the war Major Hockoday, a man well known to Fred. No sooner did Colonel Hockoday catch sight of him than he reined up his horse, and stared in amazement. A look of doubt, incredulity, then of intense surprise, came over his face.

"Great God!" he ejaculated; "Fred Shackelford!"

The words had scarcely left Colonel Hockoday's lips when Fred shouted: "Left wheel! Charge!"

Horses and riders went down before that fierce burst. Surprised and bewildered, the Confederates knew not what it meant until Colonel Hockoday shouted, "Yankees in disguise; let not one escape!" and spurred his horse forward to intercept Fred.



THE SHOT WAS FIRED BY ONE OF THE CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS.

Fred was a dead shot with the revolver, one of the best in the army; but he had not the heart to kill Colonel Hockoday, for the colonel was his father's friend. Not only this, but once, when he thought Fred had been killed by falling over a cliff, he had taken great pains to have the body found that it might receive Christian burial.

So instead of sending a ball through the colonel's heart, he sent one through his right arm, breaking it above the elbow. The revolver which Colonel Hockoday had drawn dropped from his nerveless hand, and he reeled in the saddle.

A burly Confederate trooper, unseen by Fred, spurred his horse close to him, and raised his saber to strike. There were none of Fred's men near enough to parry the blow. It seemed as though the fate of the young scout were sealed then and there. But there was a flash, a report, and the trooper tumbled from his horse, dead. The shot was fired by one of the Confederate soldiers. Like a thunderbolt, Fred and his scouts burst through the Confederate ranks, leaped their horses over the low fence, and were riding like the wind across the field toward a piece of woodland.

But the Confederates had recovered from their surprise, and were in swift pursuit, sending volley after volley after the fugitives. Now and then one of Fred's men would reel in his saddle, and then tumble headlong to the ground. A horse would go down, and the rider, left to his fate, would fight until death came. There was no surrender; to die

the death of a soldier was honorable, to suffer the fate of a spy disgraceful.

For three miles the pursuit was kept up, and then, discouraged and baffled, the Confederates gave it up. As soon as deemed prudent, Fred halted and counted his little band. Of the twenty brave fellows who had ridden with him, only ten answered to their names. There was one more, but he was not of the original party. Fred looked at him, and then exclaimed, "Green, how in the name of heaven did you get with us?"

The Confederate soldier was no less a personage than Nat Green, one of Fred's best and most daring spies. He was the one of whom Fred had spoken to General Sherman, saying he was afraid some evil had befallen him. Green's story was soon told.

Finding himself under grave suspicion, he had enlisted in the Confederate army to avoid arrest.* So far he had found no favorable opportunity for desertion. But when he saw his favorite captain about to be struck down, he risked all, and shot the trooper about to strike the blow. He then joined Fred and his men in their flight, and came off in safety.

Fred grasped the hand of the faithful spy. "Green," he said, huskily, "you saved my life. I shall never forget you." And the rest of the party crowded around Green and one by one took his hand. Of the ten men missing, Fred only too well knew their fate; they had died fighting.

*An expedient often resorted to by spies of both armies.

It was a sad party that rode into the Federal lines. General Sherman could scarcely believe what was told him. That Fred could have ridden into a brigade of Confederate cavalry, been recognized, and then escaped, even with half of his men, was almost past belief.

“Captain,” said the general, “it is wonderful; you must bear a charmed life.”

“But, General,” replied Fred, in a quivering voice, “my poor men! Ten out of the twenty fell in the unequal contest. I should have fallen if it had not been for that brave act of Nat Green. Thank God! he and Darling are among those who escaped, but every one of the boys who fell was like a brother to me.”

General Sherman was deeply moved. “Captain,” he answered, “your feelings do honor to your heart, but such is the peril of war. While I deeply sympathize with you over the loss of your men, your expedition was, from a military standpoint, a glorious success, worth the lives of many men. The information you have given me will enable me to make my flank movement intelligently, and may save the lives of hundreds. But send Green to me; I want to reward him for his brave and gallant act in saving your life by making him a non-commissioned officer.”

Valuable indeed was the information given General Sherman by Fred, and fully as valuable was what he learned from Green, for he had kept his eyes open while serving in the Confederate ranks.

On July 2d, General Stoneman's cavalry, guided by Fred, reached the Chattahoochee River by the route the scouts had taken. On the same day the Army of the Tennessee was transferred from the left to the extreme right of the army. It then swung around, threatening the flank and rear of the Confederate position. Once more General Johnston found his communications within the grasp of Sherman.

On the morning of July 3d, Kenesaw Mountain and the formidable line of works in front of the Federal army were found deserted.

What cheers, what wild hurrahs, greeted the old flag as the soldiers saw it proudly waving from the summit of Kenesaw!

CHAPTER VII.

MCPHERSON AND REVENGE.

THE discovery of a body of Federal scouts in their midst created the greatest excitement in the Confederate ranks. Although so sorely wounded, Colonel Hockoday refused to go to the hospital until he knew whether all of the scouts were captured or not. When the report was brought to him that ten of the daring fellows had been slain, but that the rest had escaped, he eagerly asked if the body of the captain in command was among the slain. No, it was not; no doubt he was among those who had escaped.

“And were none captured alive?” asked the colonel.

“Not one,” was the answer. “Those who had their horses shot refused to surrender, and died fighting. They sold their lives dearly. We have at least a dozen men killed and wounded, and one missing.”

“One missing!” exclaimed the colonel, in surprise; “how is that? How could they have taken any prisoners? Who is missing?”

“Nat Green, the suspect who joined the regiment about a month ago.”

“Colonel,” said one of his men, “I am almost sure it was Nat Green who killed Thornton. Thornton was about to cut down the Yankee captain just after he shot you. Green dashed forward as if to help Thornton; there was a flash, a report, and Thornton, instead of the Yankee captain, fell dead. Green then apparently charged on the Federals. But I believe he killed Thornton, and then went with the Yanks of his own accord.”

Colonel Hockoday groaned. “I suspected Green from the first,” he said, “and had him closely watched, but never discovered anything suspicious in his conduct.”

“Colonel,” said one of his officers, “you must have known the Yankee officer, for the moment your eyes rested on him, you cried, ‘Great God! it’s—’ but I did not catch the name. Who was it?”

It suddenly flashed into Colonel Hockoday’s mind that for the sake of General Shackelford he would not mention the name; so he replied: “It was a young dare-devil who used to scout for the Federal army in Kentucky. Lord, how my arm pains me!” And in the colonel’s distress the officer forgot to press the question.

But that night Colonel Hockoday sent a note to General Shackelford asking him, if possible, to visit him at the hospital, as he had something important to communicate.

General Shackelford lost no time in obeying the summons. When Colonel Hockoday told him

what had happened, and how his son had been discovered disguised as a Confederate, the general was not only astounded, but terror-stricken.

"Oh, God!" he exclaimed, "that I should have such a son! And if he had been captured, he would have been hanged—hanged like a common felon. Colonel, forgive me, but true as I am to the South, I am glad—yes, glad—he escaped. If he had been captured and hanged, I should have killed myself. I could not have borne the disgrace. Oh, Fred, Fred! my only son! I could die for you if you were only loyal to the South; but now—" and the old warrior bowed his head and gave way to his emotion.

"General," said the colonel, "I respect your feelings, but of one thing I think you can rest assured; your son would never have permitted himself to be captured alive. Like his men, he would have died fighting."

"I believe that—I believe that!" cried the general. "Yet the disgrace of that—to have it said that General Shackelford had a son who was a Yankee spy!"

"One thing more," continued the colonel. "I now believe Fred purposely spared my life. General Morgan told me he was the finest shot with a revolver in the Federal army—that he never missed."

"He is a capital shot," said the general; "I never saw a better."

"That being the case," answered the colonel,

“he could have sent a ball through my heart as easily as he did through my arm.”

“I can believe that of Fred,” replied the general. “He saved my life at Missionary Ridge. I heard all about it afterwards. I also know he entertains the kindest feelings toward you for endeavoring to give his body Christian burial when you thought he was killed by falling over the cliff. Fred never forgets such things.”

“Now, General,” continued the colonel, “I have sent for you to ease your mind on one thing. I know how you feel on the subject of Fred’s being in the Yankee army—what a sore spot it is. I also know that some jealousy exists on account of your last promotion, and that some tongues will wag if it become generally known that it was your son who was the leader in this daring exploit. Now, no one knows who the Yankee leader was except myself. I will keep silent. To do this does the South no harm.”

“Thank you, Colonel, thank you,” exclaimed General Shackelford; “I shall never forget your delicacy and kindness.” And the strong man was visibly affected.

But not many days were to pass before General Shackelford was to know that the troubles of his son were by no means ended.

A few days after the evacuation of Kenesaw Mountain, General Johnston was forced across the Chattahoochee. From the hilltops along the river the Federal army could see the spires of Atlanta;

the goal for which they were striving was almost reached.

Could the army cross the swift-flowing river in the face of the Confederate forces? This was the problem General Sherman had to solve. He sent Fred to scout the bank of the river for a suitable place to cross. After a most careful survey, Fred reported that he believed a crossing could be effected at the mouth of Soap Creek. Here a rough dam crossed the river, and boats could be concealed in the mouth of the creek until ready to cross. So far as he could judge, the crossing was defended by only a company of cavalry.

General Schofield went in person and reconnoitered the place, reporting favorably. On the evening of July 8th, General Schofield's troops successfully made the crossing, the Confederate cavalry fleeing after firing one volley. Fred, who was with the party, picked up a letter which one of the cavalrymen had left half-written. It was a letter to the soldier's wife, and as Fred read, he had to smile, although he felt a swelling of the heart as he thought of the waiting woman who would never receive it.

"Dear little wife," the letter ran, "do not worry about me; I am as safe as if at home. I am guarding a ford of the river some miles above the main army. It is positively lonesome here. Once in a while a solitary Yank shows himself on the opposite side of the river, and that is all. It is quiet as Sunday. I do not believe the Yankee army can

ever get across the river; so cease worrying about—” Here the letter broke off, for the writer was interrupted by cheers; a fleet of white boats from the creek darted out into the river, and the detested Yanks were over.

By the seventeenth of the month, Sherman's whole army was safely on the south bank of the Chattahoochee, all ready to take the one step forward that would bring them before Atlanta.

But a great change had taken place in the Confederate army. General Joseph E. Johnston had been superseded by General J. B. Hood. The Confederate government had become displeased with Johnston on account of his continually falling back, so he was removed and General Hood put in his place.

When General Sherman heard of the change, he cautioned his generals to guard carefully against surprises, for although he did not consider Hood as able a general as Johnston, he had the name of being a rash man, as well as a desperate fighter.

“I reckon,” remarked Fred to Darling, “that we shall see some lively times now; at least General Sherman thinks so.”

“The livelier the better,” Darling answered. “I am getting tired of these foot-races. Let's have it out, I say, and be done with it.”

The 20th of July came, and in the movement to the left for the possession of the Atlanta and Augusta Railroad the Army of the Tennessee and the Army of the Ohio became separated from the

Army of the Cumberland. Stanley's and Wood's divisions of the Fourth Corps were sent to the left to fill the gap, but when these two divisions connected with Schofield, there was still a gap of over two miles between the right of Wood's and the left of Newton's division.

Now was Hood's opportunity, and he prepared to strike a blow which would annihilate the Army of the Cumberland, while it was isolated from the rest of the army. It was four o'clock in the afternoon when the blow came—sudden and swift as the swoop of a hawk. The full force of the attack fell on Hooker's corps and Newton's division of the Fourth Corps.

Fred was over on the right when the battle opened; he had come to tell Thomas of the great gap which existed between Newton and Wood. Just as he had finished, the roar of the opening battle startled them. At General Thomas's request, Fred took his old place on his staff during the conflict. In this battle, known as the battle of Peach Tree Creek, General Thomas displayed the same qualities which made him so famous at Chickamauga.

A portion of the Confederate army struck the gap spoken of, and finding no force to oppose them, began to feel their way around on the flank and in the rear of Newton. General Thomas saw the danger, and turning to Fred, said: "Go and bring up all of the artillery on this side of the creek. Ride! ride for your life."

Away sped Fred, when the words were hardly out of the general's mouth. He found a number of the Twentieth Corps batteries still on the north side of Peach Tree Creek.

"The General," Fred shouted, "General Thomas wants you. This way! this way!"

Away went the batteries at full speed, Fred leading the way. But so pressing was the danger that General Thomas met them.

"Faster! faster!" he shouted to the artillerymen, who were urging their horses on with whip and spur.

"Never before," said Fred, "did I see the general in such a hurry, or urge his horse to so fast a gallop."

"Here! here!" at last the general cried, and with his own hand he pointed to the place where the guns were to go into position. A moment more and earth and air trembled with the roar of artillery, and an iron hail smote the ranks of the enemy, causing them to falter, and then break in the wildest confusion. The flank was saved.

The full force of the Confederate charge struck the Twentieth Corps, and while General Thomas was saving the flank, Hooker's brave men were fighting a terrific battle. For two hours the conflict raged, and then, baffled at all points, the Confederates fell back.

In this battle Hood lost forty-five hundred men, while eighteen hundred fell on the Federal side. Fred carried the full details of the fight to Gen-

eral Sherman, who was greatly gratified over the result.

“Hood has commenced well,” he said; “let him keep it up.”*

On the morning of the 21st, Fred carried orders to General McPherson to press the enemy on the extreme left. This McPherson did, and only the timely arrival of Cleburne's division prevented the Seventeenth Corps from entering Atlanta.

The struggle for the possession of Leggett's Hill, Cleburne characterized as one of “the bitterest fights of his life.” But the Federals carried and held the hill. It was during this struggle that General Walter Q. Gresham fell sorely wounded.

On the morning of the 22d, the Confederate trenches in front of the center and right of the Federal army were found deserted. At first General Sherman thought that Atlanta had been evacuated, and issued orders to his generals to advance and occupy the city.

Fred, who had taken such an order to McPherson, came riding back, and with a sly twinkle in his eye, reported that General McPherson had found it impossible to execute the order, as the enemy was still in force in his front.

“I am fearful,” answered Sherman with a smile, “that none of us will dine in Atlanta today; the

*General Hood asserts in his “Memoirs” that if his orders had been obeyed, he would have achieved a great victory. His orders were to attack at one o'clock instead of four, and the attacking column moved a mile farther to the right than he intended. But if he had attacked at one instead of four, and a mile farther to his left, he would have struck the whole of the Fourteenth Corps, as well as the Twentieth, and his defeat would have been only the more crushing.

enemy have only fallen back into their works around the city.'"

General Hood, instead of evacuating the city, as was at first supposed, had planned one of the greatest surprises for General Sherman that he received during the campaign. In imitation of Stonewall Jackson's celebrated movement at Chancellorsville, when that general marched from the right to the left of the Confederate army, and fell upon the flank and rear of the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps, utterly routing them and gaining the greatest victory of his life, so did General Hood conceive the idea of marching Hardee's corps around to his right and falling upon the flank and rear of the Army of the Tennessee. The movement was a perfect success as far as its execution was concerned.

The Sixteenth Corps had been left behind at Decatur to guard the trains. On the morning of the 22d, this corps received orders to march and form on the left of the Seventeenth Corps, thus placing it on the extreme left flank of the army. All unmindful of danger, the corps commenced the march. As Murray's regular battery was trotting along a road through a wood, and, as it supposed, two or three miles in rear of the army, suddenly it was surrounded by the enemy, and surrendered without firing a gun.

As oblivious of danger was the whole Sixteenth Corps, when to their consternation Hardee's corps burst out of the woods in magnificent battle array, and charged on them with fearful yells.

Never was a surprise more complete, never was one met with more coolness. It was but the work of a moment for the corps to halt, face to the left, and meet the charge. There was no repetition of the rout of the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps at Chancellorsville. Instead, the corps stood firm, and hurled back Hardee's charging columns. In vain did the Confederates hurl themselves again and again on that slender line. It stood immovable.

But the Sixteenth Corps when attacked had not yet joined with the Seventeenth Corps, and there was a wide gap between the two corps. Through this gap the Confederates poured, and formed their line to attack.



GENERAL MCPHERSON.

It was into this gap that the gallant McPherson rode, and rode to his death. He was in consultation with General Sherman, when the unexpected sound of battle on his flank and in his rear warned him that all was not well. Hastily mounting his horse, he galloped to the scene of conflict, and in less than an hour his lifeless body was brought back. The god of war claimed no nobler sacrifice during the war.

Fred had been sent with orders at the beginning of the battle to General Frank P. Blair, commanding the Seventeenth Corps. The left of this corps was attacked in front and rear, and several of the

regiments lost heavily in prisoners. Flushed with success, the Confederates advanced with wild yells, attacking Leggett's Hill from the rear.

Now commenced a conflict the like of which Fred had never before seen. For a moment the soldiers were as if paralyzed when they saw the Confederates charging them from the rear.

"Over the works!" shouted General Force.

The spell was broken. With a cheer the Federals vaulted over their breastworks and faced to the rear. On came the yelling, charging columns of the Confederates, confident of victory. A sheet of flame and smoke burst from the Federal lines. The charging columns wavered and staggered, then came sweeping on. Hundreds fell, but the survivors, breasting the leaden storm, reached the works. Here they were met with bayonet and butt of musket, and beaten down. Not a soldier in the Federal line wavered or thought of surrender. Every man was a hero. The officers cheered on the men, fighting by their side in the ranks. The brave Force fell, shot through the head; but nothing daunted, his men fought on.

A Confederate color-bearer jumped on the works, but a ball from Fred's revolver struck him in the breast, and he sank down dead, the flag falling over on the Federal side. A Confederate colonel led his men to the works, where panting they lay down, only the narrow line of earthworks separating them from the Federals. Colonel W. W. Belknap reached over, and catching the Confed-

erate colonel by the hair of his head, dragged him struggling over the works. Belknap's men cheered like mad as they witnessed the brave act.

"They are wavering! they are giving back!" shouted Fred; "give it to them!"

A few crashing volleys and the disappointed Confederates fell back, seeking shelter in the woods. The Federals lay panting like dogs. But they had only a short time to rest before the Confederates were on them again. Once more the battle roared and thundered, and again were the Confederates driven to the shelter of the woods.

Hood, from his lookout in Atlanta, hearing the terrible roar of battle in the rear of the Federal lines, thought to finish his supposed victory by charging from Atlanta, thus having the Federals between two fires. The troops on Leggett's Hill had just repulsed the second charge from the rear, when turning their eyes toward Atlanta, they saw Cheatham's corps sweeping down upon them. "Over the works!" shouted the officers; and leaping back over their breastworks, the soldiers now fought facing Atlanta. A few moments of crashing musketry, of flame and smoke, of curses and yells, and Cheatham's men went staggering and bleeding back.

But to the north, in front of the Fifteenth Corps, the roar of battle grew louder and fiercer. Fred looked, and a great groan burst from him.

"Great God!" he cried; "the Fifteenth Corps has broken!"

It was too true. The Fifteenth Corps—the pride of Sherman and of Logan—was in flight. Cheatham's charge had broken their lines.

But the men on Leggett's Hill had little time to look. Hardee, hearing the sound of battle from the Atlanta side, once more charged from the rear. Again did the veterans of the Seventeenth Corps leap their works, and once more were the charging columns of Hardee hurled back. During the battle, the soldiers on Leggett's Hill leaped their works no less than five times.

But how fared it with the Fifteenth Corps? Taking advantage of a railroad cut, General Cheatham threw a strong column through it. So dense was the smoke, this column was not discovered until it was on the flank and in the rear of the Federal lines.

For a few minutes the battle raged, and then the Fifteenth Corps broke and fled, leaving DeGres's battery in the enemy's hands. Every horse except one belonging to the battery was killed during the fight. Captain DeGres came back, the tears running down his cheeks, mourning over the loss of his beloved guns. They were twenty-pound Parrots, and the delight of the captain's heart.

General Sherman, from his headquarters at the Howard House, saw the disaster, and made haste to retrieve it.

"Bring up your artillery," was his order to General Schofield.

Soon twenty cannon were sweeping the Confed-

erates' lines with an enfilading fire of shell and canister. The charge was stayed, but the Confederates still held the breastworks wrested from the Fifteenth Corps, thus endangering the whole Seventeenth Corps.

Now a lone rider, on a horse as black as night, appeared on the scene. "It's Logan! It's Logan!" was the cry.

Yes; it was General John A. Logan, who on the death of General McPherson had succeeded to the command of the Army of the Tennessee. Logan was at the left when the ominous tidings were borne to him that the Fifteenth Corps had broken and was in flight. He could scarcely believe the



GENERAL LOGAN.

news. The Fifteenth Corps—his corps—his boys—fleeing from the enemy! Like a whirlwind he rode to the point of disaster.

He who saw Logan on that battle-swept field will never forget him. His midnight steed was covered with foam and dust, his hat was gone, his long hair was flying in the wind, and his eyes were blazing with wrath and excitement.

Down the line, among the panic-stricken soldiers, he swept. "McPherson and revenge! McPherson and revenge!" was his cry.

He looked like the god of war incarnate. The soldiers saw, heard, halted, and faced about.

“Logan! Logan!” rang above the roar of battle. Then as one man they took up the cry, “McPherson and revenge! McPherson and revenge!”

The panic was over; there was to be no more retreating. Hastily were the lines reformed to retake the breastworks.

From the left came a brigade from the Sixteenth Corps. They were black with the smoke of battle and flushed with victory, for in their front the enemy had been driven from the field. They were panting like dogs, for they had come on the run for a mile and a half; but without thoughts of rest, they joined forces with the Fifteenth Corps, and with the cry of “McPherson and revenge!” the whole force sprang to the charge.

Nothing could withstand that fierce assault. The Confederates were hurled from the intrenchments they had captured, DeGres's battery was retaken, and Cheatham's whole corps sent reeling back into Atlanta.

The fight was over. Hood's desperate attempt to crush the Army of the Tennessee had failed. But on the Federal side, amid the general rejoicing, there was sorrow—sorrow for McPherson—McPherson, the young, the brave, the daring, and gentle as he was brave and daring. Not only was he the idol of the Army of the Tennessee, but of the whole army. Throughout the Army of the Cumberland and the Army of the Ohio the grief over his death was almost as intense as in the Army of the Tennessee.



“MC PHERSON AND REVENGE!”

It was dark before the battle was entirely over, and Fred left Leggett's Hill to report to the headquarters of General Sherman. He found the general greatly elated over the result of the battle, but sorrowing over the death of McPherson. When Fred told him of the conflict on Leggett's Hill, he could hardly restrain his enthusiasm.

"Such soldiers, such soldiers!" he exclaimed. "Did general ever before command such men?"

The next day came the sad duty of burying the dead. The Army of the Tennessee lost nearly thirty-six hundred men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, and ten pieces of artillery. Just how many the Confederates lost will never be known. One thousand of their dead were delivered to them under a flag of truce, and eight hundred were buried in front of the Sixteenth and Fifteenth Corps. The total Confederate loss has been variously estimated at from six thousand to ten thousand. It was a bold and desperate game that Hood played, and he lost.*

*From a military standpoint, Hood's flank attack on the Army of the Tennessee deserves to rank with that of Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville. It was admirably conceived and well executed. Why then did it fail while Jackson's won? From two causes: chance, and the character of the troops assailed. Chance has decided the fortune of many a general, and lost or won many a battle. Chance is something no general can guard against. It was by chance that Hardee met the Sixteenth Corps on the march, and that meeting had much to do with the defeat of the Confederates.

The coolness which the Sixteenth Corps showed when surprised on the march, and the tenacity with which the Seventeenth Corps clung to Leggett's Hill, must excite the admiration of every true man. Greater bravery was not shown on any other battlefield of the war.

It was from these causes that the movement failed; not from any mistake of Hardee, as General Hood would have the world believe.

CHAPTER VIII.

STONEMAN'S RAID.

A COUPLE of days after the battle of Atlanta, Fred met his young friend Captain Hugh Raymond.

“Hello! Hugh,” he exclaimed; “I am glad to see you. I have big news to tell you. It’s safe to talk with you, for I know you won’t peep.”

“What is it?” drawled Hugh; “has Sherman concluded to give me McPherson’s place? That would be a wise move. I have always known I was destined for greatness.”

“Major-General Raymond, allow me to congratulate you,” replied Fred, gravely taking off his hat. “But why stop at the command of the Army of the Tennessee? Why not supersede General Sherman at once?”

“Oh! Uncle Billy and I are good friends. I couldn’t think of jumping his claim; it wouldn’t be the fair thing. But what is your news?”

“Such a distinguished officer as you should know, and not be calling on a poor captain.”

“Oh, quit your fooling! Don’t you see I am just dying to get at that news?”

“All right, Hugh. The biggest cavalry raid

ever attempted in the West is being organized. Its destination is Macon, and perhaps Andersonville."

"Whew! Shackelford, you are joking; the cavalry wouldn't attempt as big a thing as that."

"There you are wrong, Hugh. The whole thing has been arranged. Ed McCook, with his division of cavalry, is to start from the right of the army and strike the Macon Railroad at or near Lovejoy. General Stoneman will move on the same day from Decatur, and if possible effect a junction with McCook at Lovejoy. The two will then move on Macon and capture it. General Garrard will move with his division as far as Flat Rock, and will then be left to look after Wheeler. Macon once captured, Stoneman and McCook, if thought expedient, are to move on Andersonville, where there are at least thirty thousand of our prisoners confined."

Hugh gave a prolonged whistle. "That is a magnificent programme, on paper, Captain, but it is a big undertaking you have mapped out. How many men will there be in the raid?"

"At least nine thousand. I am to accompany the expedition; General Stoneman especially requested it, and General Sherman has consented. The general is hoping for great things from the raid."

"And so you expect to accomplish all of these things with the cavalry, do you?" and Hugh sniffed rather contemptuously. Like many of the

infantry, he had a poor opinion of the fighting qualities of the cavalry. Hugh's dislike of the cavalry had been strengthened by a little incident which had happened about two years before. He had laughingly offered a reward of five dollars for the dead body of a cavalryman killed in battle. A burly cavalryman who had heard him, instead of accepting the wager, gave him a good thrashing, blacking both of his eyes. That thrashing had always been a sore spot with Hugh, and he never quite forgave the cavalry for it.

"I suppose," continued Hugh, "that Wheeler will just sit still and let Stoneman work his own sweet will. I tell you, Captain, that little devil Wheeler is worth half a dozen of our generals. I shouldn't be surprised if he should play ducks and drakes with your fine plans. But, Captain, I sincerely hope your raid will be a grand success. I only wish I could go with you."

"So do I, Hugh. Wouldn't it be glorious if we could liberate all those poor fellows in that vile pen at Andersonville?"

"That it would, Captain; but be careful that you are not carried a prisoner to Andersonville, instead of liberating those already there. I have little faith in these cavalry raids; so far they have accomplished little. But I must be going. Good-bye, Captain, and may the raid be a grand success."

It was as Fred told Hugh. General Sherman had planned a raid on the Confederate rear, which he fondly hoped would give him Atlanta. But

unfortunately for Sherman, he had not a Sheridan to lead his cavalry.

Fred watched the preparations for the raid with anxious eyes, and soon became satisfied that things were not just as they should be. The fact was the cavalry had no real head. General Stoneman was nominally commander of the cavalry, but really had command of the left wing only. The different division commanders seemed to exercise about equal authority.

On the 27th of July, the raiders started. The right division, under the command of General Edward McCook, was at first very successful. Making a wide sweep to the right of Atlanta, he struck the Atlanta and West Point Railroad at Palmetto, and destroyed two and a half miles of the track. Then riding straight for Lovejoy, on the Atlantic and Macon Railroad, he destroyed five miles of that track. During this time he had captured and burned nearly a thousand wagons, killed a thousand mules, and destroyed a large amount of provisions and cotton, besides taking about five hundred prisoners.

At Lovejoy, General McCook found General Wheeler between his position and where he supposed General Stoneman to be. Hearing nothing from Stoneman, General McCook resolved to return by the same route as that by which he came. But at Newnan he was attacked by Wheeler, and badly defeated. The prisoners he had taken were recaptured, and his whole command was scattered, hun-

dreds of his men losing their horses, and taking to the woods and mountains on foot. In this way all except about five hundred of them eventually found their way into the Federal lines. General McCook became separated from his command, but made his escape, accompanied by one orderly.

General Stoneman started with his division from Decatur on the same day that McCook started from the right. General Garrard's large division was to protect Stoneman's left flank. General Garrard moved with Stoneman as far as Flat Rock. At Flat Rock General Stoneman decided not to attempt to join McCook at Lovejoy, but to leave Garrard at Flat Rock to engage the attention of Wheeler, and to push straight on to Macon with his division, sending one of his brigades to break the railroad leading east from Macon. This the brigade succeeded in doing, joining Stoneman before Macon.

Fred was with the column under General Stoneman. He had ten of his best scouts with him, and they did yeoman service in discovering the position and number of the enemy in their front. When the column first started, Fred had high hopes of the success of the raid.

"I say, Dick," he remarked to Darling, "if we can only take Macon, and then go on to Andersonville and liberate the prisoners, it would be the grandest thing of the war."

"So it would," answered Darling; "and I see no reason why the raid should not be a success."

"Neither do I," was Fred's answer.

But when Flat Rock was reached, both Fred and Darling had reason to change their minds. When they brought General Stoneman the news that Wheeler was between him and Lovejoy with a large force, and the general concluded not to try to effect a junction with McCook, but to leave Garrard's division at Flat Rock to engage the attention of Wheeler, while he with his division would push straight for Macon, Fred felt that the raid would be a failure. He remonstrated as strongly as his position warranted. "Attack Wheeler," was his suggestion, "drive him back on McCook, and between the two forces he can be destroyed. With Wheeler and his cavalry out of the way, we can ride where we choose."

When Fred modestly hinted this he was met with a flat refusal from General Stoneman.

"No," replied the general; "that means a heavy battle; and even if we be successful, it may leave us so crippled that we shall be in no condition to advance. You report that the road to Macon is practically clear. By leaving General Garrard here to occupy the attention of Wheeler, we can dash forward, and be in Macon before the rebels realize what we are doing."

So with a force hardly exceeding two thousand men, General Stoneman started for Macon.

General Garrard poorly performed his part. Although his force greatly exceeded the force of General Wheeler, he became bewildered, and after a slight skirmish with Wheeler's forces, he evacu-

ated Flat Rock, and retreated toward Lithonia. This was the beginning of the disasters which befell the great cavalry raid. After Garrard's forces were gone, Wheeler at once dispatched a brigade in pursuit of General Stoneman, and with the remainder of his force fell on McCook, to the utter discomfiture of that general, as has been shown. General Stoneman met with no serious opposition until within three miles of Macon, when he was met by a strong force and driven back. For nearly twenty miles there was a continuous running fight, until at last the Federal forces found themselves surrounded.

A council of war was held, and General Stoneman directed Colonel Capron and Colonel Adams, his brigade commanders, to attempt to cut their way out. He, with the remnant of his force, about five hundred men, would hold the enemy as long as possible, thus giving them time to escape.

"And what will you then do, General?" asked Colonel Capron.

"Surrender," was the reply. "I shall sacrifice myself to save you and Adams, with your commands."

Both Colonels Capron and Adams protested against leaving their commander, but at last consented, and both were successful in cutting their way through the enemy's lines.

Fred during this time was in the rear, helping to beat back the enemy's advance, and knew nothing of General Stoneman's decision. He had just made a brilliant charge at the head of about a hun-

dred men, scattering the Confederates before them, thus for a time effectually checking the pursuit, when an orderly rode up to him, and commanded him to cease firing, saying that the general was about to surrender.

Fred was thunderstruck. He was flushed with his success, and could scarcely believe what he had heard.

“To surrender!” he gasped.

“Yes; both Colonels Capron and Adams with their brigades have cut their way out, and General Stoneman is going to surrender the rest of us.”

Instantly Fred wheeled his horse, and calling to his scouts, dashed back to find the general.

“Is it true you intend to surrender?” asked Fred, abruptly.

“Yes,” answered General Stoneman. “It is madness to continue the fight any longer. Colonels Capron and Adams, with their brigades, have been gone nearly an hour. I have only continued the fight to enable them to get a good start. I believe they are now out of danger, and so shall surrender, and stop the useless slaughter.”

“But, General, if Capron and Adams have cut their way out, why cannot we?”

“Because the whole rebel force would be upon us. My fighting here for the last hour has prevented the enemy from pursuing Capron and Adams. I have now barely five hundred men left. For us to attempt to cut our way out now would be madness.”

"General," cried Fred, forgetting himself and what was due to his commanding general, "I protest against this surrender. I believe we can cut our way out. I do not believe the rebel force around us is nearly as great as you think. I am almost sure we can cut our way through."

"My officers think differently," replied General Stoneman, coldly. "As for me, I care not what becomes of me, but I cannot see my brave men slaughtered uselessly." Then turning to Captain Perkins, he said, "Raise the white flag."

"Hold!" cried Fred; "before you do that give me five minutes in which to cut my way out."

The general shook his head.

"Four—three—two minutes!" exclaimed Fred, in desperation.

"Two, then," said the general; "but, Captain, remember I am not responsible for your foolhardy attempt, and I absolutely forbid you to take any men with you with the exception of your scouts."

Fred turned to his men; there were but six of them left. "Boys," he said, "shall we try to cut our way out? It may be death. None need go unless they wish."

"Death is preferable to Andersonville!" each and every one shouted. "Lead on, Captain; we are with you."

Casting a proud look on his men, Fred galloped eastward across an open field. Barring the way were at least fifty Confederates.

"Charge!" shouted Fred.

Before the Confederates realized that seven men were charging half a hundred, Fred and his little party were on them. Horses and riders went down in that fierce rush. There was a rattle of fire-arms, a clash of sabers, and then from out the confused mass five horsemen galloped away, pursued by a shower of balls. Two of Fred's men had fallen, but at least half a dozen Confederates had bitten the dust, besides the wounded.

A rapid ride of an hour brought Fred and his party to the rear of Capron's brigade. Close after them came a body of Confederates in swift pursuit. Fred helped the rear guard beat back the Confederates, and then reported to Colonel Capron.

"Captain," said the colonel. "I am more than glad to see you. Take command of my rear guard. Pick out seventy-five men with the best horses. Also see that you choose men who have not been demoralized. On their courage and your watchfulness will depend the safety of my command."

Fred accepted the charge, and soon had picked out seventy-five men, cool, determined fellows, and all splendidly mounted. For three days and nights the command rode, with hardly an hour's rest. Toward the evening of the first day, Capron was joined by Colonel Adams's brigade, and together the two commands made their way northward.

For two days the rear guard had an almost continual battle, but Fred posted his men so skillfully, and inflicted such punishment on the pursuers, that

on the evening of the second day the Confederates apparently gave up the pursuit and let the weary Federals continue their way in peace.

On the third day the brigades of Capron and Adams became separated through the error of a guide, who led Capron to a wrong ford across the Oconee River. But as his command had not been molested during the day, and his men and horses were utterly worn out by three days and nights of incessant riding, Capron decided to rest for the night.

Sending for Fred, he said: "Captain, I want you to call in your men and let them get a little rest. They must be utterly exhausted. You have done nobly. Not once have I had to halt my column."

"Yes; my men are completely worn out," replied Fred; "but are we out of danger?"

"I think so," answered Colonel Capron; "we have been unmolested during the whole day."

"But, Colonel, where is the rest of the command? Where is Colonel Adams?"

"I don't know, and that troubles me. My guide has misled me. We should have crossed the Oconee two and a half miles above Athens. The guide has led me six miles out of the way to another ford. There was a large force of the enemy near us at the time, as you know, and I determined to keep on without Adams. For the last twenty miles even your rear guard has not been molested. I think we are entirely safe from attack for the

night. I will also see that the command is well picketed. You can rest in peace."

Fred had scarcely heard what the colonel was saying. He was so exhausted he reeled in the saddle like a drunken man. For three days and nights he had not closed his eyes. Some of his men had snatched a minute or two of sleep at a time, but Fred had not dared to do even this.

"Captain," continued the colonel, kindly, "you look like a dead man. Call in your men, and take a little rest, as I bid you."

Fred did as he was directed. In fact, he knew that he must have some rest or he would collapse. Calling in his men, he bade them get some sleep. Then wrapping Prince's bridle around his arm, he threw himself on the ground, and in half a minute was sound asleep.

How long he slept he never knew. But he was suddenly awakened by the trampling of horses, the sharp report of fire-arms, the clash of sabers, fierce yells, cries of terror, curses, and groans. In fact, pandemonium was raging around him. Charging through the camp were hundreds of rebel cavalymen, shooting, cutting, trampling underfoot.

Capron's men, bewildered, frightened, terror-stricken, could make but little resistance. Hundreds of them, leaving their horses and arms, fled into the darkness of the woods. Others gave themselves up, begging for mercy.

With a bound Fred was on Prince's back. He saw a shadowy arm make a grasp for Prince's

bridle. There came a flash from Fred's revolver, and the arm fell shattered by its owner's side.

Just then he heard Darling's voice calling, "Captain, Captain, where are you?"

"Here," shouted Fred, and he spurred his horse toward the sound. In the darkness it was hard to tell friend from foe.

"Dick! Dick! where are you?" shouted Fred.

"Here," answered his trusty lieutenant; and in a moment the two friends were side by side.

"Hold on there!" thundered a Confederate as he grasped Darling.

Darling seized the Confederate by the collar, and hurled him with tremendous force from his horse.

"Come, Captain," cried the gallant fellow; and straight through the struggling, shrieking mass they rode, and as they rode they emptied their revolvers, and their pathway was one of blood.

As if maddened by their escape, the Confederates fired volley after volley into the darkness in which they had disappeared. Darling's left arm suddenly felt as though pierced by a red-hot iron, and his horse gave a start, then stumbled and nearly fell, but gathered himself and went on again. Darling soon found himself growing faint from the loss of blood. His horse also lagged, and he had hard work to spur him on.

At length Fred, seeing that Darling had hard work to keep up, said: "What's the matter, Dick? We are merely creeping."

"Captain," he answered, "I have tried to keep it from you, but my horse is sorely hit. I do not think he can go much farther, and—and I feel faint. I am shot through the arm."

"Oh, Dick! why didn't you tell me? Let's see." And Fred dismounted. They were in an open field, and day had already begun to break, so Fred could see faintly. Helping Darling from his horse, Fred carefully examined the wounded arm. He found that Darling had been shot through the fleshy part of the left arm. Although the bone had not been touched, he had lost a great deal of blood. The first thing that Fred did was to stanch the blood. Then taking a bandage and lint from his saddle-roll, he tenderly bound up the arm. "Now, old fellow, how do you feel?" asked Fred, when he was through.

"Much better," replied Darling. "No surgeon could have done it nicer."

They now turned their attention to Darling's horse. The poor beast seemed to be in great distress, and was trembling violently. Even as they were examining him to see how badly he was wounded, the horse fell over dead.

It was now broad daylight, and the two fugitives looked at each other as if to ask, "What next?"

Darling was the first to speak. "Captain," said he, "mount your horse and escape. Leave me to my fate."

"Never," replied Fred. "Dick, how can you

ask me to do such a thing. Did you ever desert me when in danger?"

Darling's lip trembled. "Captain," he answered, "the case was different with me. I only did my duty."

"And I shall do mine; so say no more."

"Captain, I cannot bear to see you captured. If the rebels find out they have taken the daring and well-known scout Captain Fred Shackelford, it may go hard with you. Remember how many times you have ridden behind the Confederate lines dressed in their uniform. They will not know me, and I shall simply be held as a prisoner."

"Say no more," answered Fred. "Your fate shall be my fate. But, Darling, there is no need of our being known if we are captured. We have no insignia of rank about us. We will be two private soldiers. Let's see: I will be Charlie Bailey, and you Ed Merchant, both of Company B, Third Kentucky. I know most every man in that company."

Darling could not help smiling. "All right, Charlie," he exclaimed; "what can be done?"

"The first thing is to get out of this open field into the woods. Once there, I am in hopes we can elude the enemy and escape. Then we may fall in with some of the boys. I will help you on Prince, and lead him. The cover of the woods once gained, I shall feel comparatively safe."

Fred was just on the point of helping Darling into the saddle, when they were startled by a wild

hurrah and the trampling of horses. Looking up, they saw a company of Confederate cavalry sweeping down upon them. Escape was impossible.

“It’s no use to resist, Dick,” groaned Fred.
“It is all up with us. We are prisoners.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE FALL OF ATLANTA.

THE great cavalry raid, from which so much had been expected, was a complete failure. General Stoneman was a prisoner, together with about fifteen hundred men from his and McCook's command. For days the scattered cavalymen came creeping into the Federal lines, without horses, without arms; in fact, they rejoiced at having succeeded in saving themselves.

For days Colonel Capron was thought to be a prisoner, but on the 16th of August he found his way into the Union lines near Marietta, accompanied by six of his soldiers. For two weeks they had been skulking through and hiding in the woods. So many of the men who were thought to have been captured came successively straggling in that Fred's friends kept hoping that he would appear; but of all the scouts, only Craig and Owens reported. Both of them had escaped in the darkness when Capron was attacked, and after wandering for a week through the woods, had succeeded in safely entering the Federal lines. They were sure that Fred and Darling would report in time, but as day after day passed and nothing was heard of them, hope gave

way to despair. They were either killed or prisoners—which, no one knew.

Craig, who was known to General Sherman as one of Fred's most trustworthy men, was called into the presence of that general and closely questioned. The general was not only disappointed, but completely disgusted with the outcome of the raid. In fact, he expressed himself in nearly the same terms as Captain Raymond had done concerning the cavalry. General Sherman knew he had double the cavalry that Hood had, and he thought they ought to have accomplished something.

"If General Garrard had held Flat Rock against Wheeler," answered Craig, in reply to a question, "I believe the raid would have been successful, at least so far as destroying the railroad and getting back safe was concerned. The retreat of General Garrard enabled Wheeler to throw all his force on Stoneman and McCook."

"But why did not General Stoneman obey his orders to join McCook at Lovejoy before proceeding to Macon?" asked Sherman, in a quick, impetuous tone.

"Wheeler barred the way. I know Captain Shackelford begged General Stoneman while he had all his forces united to attack Wheeler, but the general refused. Captain Shackelford said with Wheeler once destroyed, we could ride where we chose."

"The captain was right," growled Sherman.

Craig then by request gave a full account of what happened at the time that Stoneman surrendered; how Fred begged and was at last granted two minutes in which to cut his way out; how seven of them rode through the rebel line, losing only two of the seven.

"Still General Stoneman thought he couldn't cut his way through?" queried Sherman.

"I suppose so, as he surrendered," was Craig's answer.

"You were with the rear guard, were you not?" then asked the general.

"Yes, sir; Captain Shackelford had command of the rear guard."

"And you had no serious trouble in holding the rebels back?"

"No, sir; Captain Shackelford managed it so admirably that the rebels feared an ambushade at every turn, and were very wary how they approached us. There was comparatively little loss on the retreat until Capron's brigade was surprised and routed."

"And Captain Shackelford, where did you see him last?"

"The night of the surprise. For three days and nights we had had no rest, so Colonel Capron, thinking we were out of danger, called in the rear guard. He assured Captain Shackelford that he would have the command well picketed, and told him to sleep without fear. Yet no one knew the rebels were near until they were in our midst, cut-

ting and shooting. It was a complete surprise. Captain Shackelford was either killed or captured at that time."

"That will do, Sergeant," replied the general. "I have heard enough of the pitiful business. I am very sorry to lose Captain Shackelford. I can only hope he is a prisoner. For the time being, Sergeant, you will have command of my scouts. I shall give orders for you to be obeyed as such."

Craig thanked him, but departed in no wise elated over his promotion. His heart was with his absent captain. He would not, could not, believe he was dead.



GENERAL HOOKER.

During the latter days of July and the earlier days of August great changes had taken place in the armies, and serious heart-burnings had arisen in consequence.

On the recommendation of General Sherman, General O. O. Howard had been assigned to the command of the Army of the Tennessee, to succeed the universally lamented McPherson. This greatly angered General Hooker, who as a major-general ranked General Howard. The disappointment and mortification was greater than the hero of Lookout Mountain could bear, and in a huff he tendered his resignation, which General Sherman promptly accepted. There were many who at the time, and

since, have thought that the appointment should have gone to General John A. Logan, the senior corps commander of the Army of the Tennessee, who had shown great skill and gallantry when, upon the sudden and unexpected death of General McPherson, he assumed command upon the battlefield, and with an almost disheartened and demoralized army won a signal and effective victory. General Sherman, however, contended that he was at the time in the midst of a critical and perilous campaign; "had a bold and determined foe in our immediate front, strongly intrenched," and, in short, "had plenty of hard fighting ahead"; he felt, under the circumstances, that he must have in the important commands men who were "purely and technically soldiers"—that is, West Point men, who were soldiers by education and by profession.

At nearly the same time—that is, early in August—General John M. Palmer, commanding the Fourteenth Corps, one of the finest corps in the army, caused considerable derangement to General Sherman's plans on the battlefield by declining to act under the orders of General Schofield, on the ground that he (Palmer) ranked Schofield. General Sherman tried to show General Palmer the error of his way, but Palmer refused to be convinced, and asked to be relieved. This was promptly done by General Sherman, who selected General Jefferson C. Davis to command the corps; and upon his recommendation the President brevetted Davis a major-general, and assigned him to the

command, "and thenceforward (to use General Sherman's words) I had no reason to complain of the slowness or inactivity of that splendid corps."

General Hooker had been in the sulks ever since Sherman reprimanded him at Culp's Farm. This ended Hooker's active work in the war; but the country will always have a kindly remembrance of "Fighting Joe," and the story of his battle above the clouds will be told long after many other more sanguinary and more effective conflicts of the war are forgotten.

On the 27th and 28th of July, General Sherman transferred the Army of the Tennessee from the left flank to the extreme right flank of the army. Here on the 28th Hood made another desperate assault, this time endeavoring to turn the Federal right flank. The charge struck the Fifteenth Corps, and was bloodily repulsed.

In this battle, known as the battle of "Ezra Church," nearly four thousand Confederates fell, to less than six hundred on the Federal side. Among the Confederate wounded were Generals Stewart, Loring, Brown, and Johnson, which shows the desperation with which these officers led their troops. It was Logan with his Fifteenth Corps that mainly fought this battle, and nobly did he and his men maintain their reputation.

As soon as possible after his return, Craig sought Captain Hugh Raymond, and told him of the fate of Fred.

He found that Hugh had been offered and had

accepted a position on the staff of General David S. Stanley, who had succeeded General Howard as commander of the Fourth Corps.

The news that Fred was missing enraged Hugh. Fred had always been Hugh's beau ideal of a soldier, and he loved him as a brother.

"I told him," he cried, "the blamed cavalry would get him into trouble, and that he would be more likely to see the inside of Andersonville than he would be to liberate the prisoners there. I wouldn't give one good brigade of infantry for all the cavalry in the army."

"Don't know about that," responded Craig; "the cavalry boys did some mighty good fighting. I must say this raid was a sad fizzle, but that was owing more to the generals than the men. Then, Captain, let me tell you something. It takes more grit to sit quietly on a horse while the bullets are zipping around you than it does to hug the ground. Cavalry to be effective must go in on a charge. But what I should like to know is what has become of Captain Shackelford."

"So should I," exclaimed Hugh. "I have a mind to go in search of him, if I can get permission."

"Here's with you!" shouted Craig. Just then an orderly came up and told Hugh that General Stanley wished to see him.

In a moment Hugh came back, and said: "Big movement going on over on the right. The Fourth Corps is ordered to make a demonstration to keep

the rebs busy in our front. Try to see me to-morrow." And he galloped away, being now a mounted officer.

Soon the roar of cannon and sputtering of musketry told that the demonstration was being made.

Craig managed to see Hugh the next day, and found that young officer engaged in the delightful pastime of roasting General John M. Palmer.

"What's the matter?" asked Craig. "I thought Palmer was a good general. Seems as though I have heard you sing his praises more than once."

"So I have, so I have," answered Hugh; "but Palmer has too blamed much dignity for the good of the cause. In fact, if Palmer's dignity or the country had to suffer, it would be the country every time, if the general had his say."

"What has happened to set you going like this?" asked Craig.

"When I left you yesterday, you remember I told you we had to make a demonstration to cover a big movement over on the right."

"Yes, I remember."

"Well, Uncle Billy had everything fixed to strike the Johnnies a telling blow, a blow which he hoped would give him the possession of Atlanta. He placed General Schofield in command on the right, ordering Palmer to report to him. Would you believe it, Palmer wouldn't budge an inch. Said he outranked Schofield, and that Schofield should report to him instead of him to Schofield. He persisted in arguing the question with Sherman,

and he argued so long the whole movement proved a failure, and three or four hundred of our boys were killed and wounded for nothing. But then Palmer's dignity was upheld, and what are a few hundred lives and the failure of an attack to that?"

"What will General Sherman do about it?" asked Craig.

"Oh, Uncle Billy is awful mad! He tried to reason with Palmer, and showed him that according to the army precedents Schofield outranked him, to say nothing about Schofield's being the commander of a department; but Palmer would not hear to it, and said he would ask to be relieved before he would take orders from Schofield; so I reckon there will be another resignation."

"I am sorry," said Craig. "Why can't our generals dwell together in peace. Now here are Hooker and Palmer, both good generals, and both asking to be relieved."

"Who cares?" broke in Hugh; "let them go. Just look at Logan. See the difference between him and Hooker and Palmer. Logan ought to have had the command of the Army of the Tennessee. Everybody says so. But did Logan sulk and stand back when the command of the Army of the Tennessee was given to Howard? Not much! Just see how he pitched in and knocked the stuffing out of the rebs at Ezra Church. I tell you, Logan is the boy. Country before dignity with him."

"You are right there, Captain. But to change

the subject, what are we going to do about Captain Shackelford?"

"I was just coming to that. But, Craig, it's all up about my going to hunt him up. I asked the general about it—General Stanley, I mean—and he nearly killed himself laughing over what he called my Quixotic idea. He said he admired my devotion to my friend, but had a poor opinion of my judgment. In fact, he denominated it a piece of absurd folly. So, old fellow, you see it is all off so far as I am concerned."

Craig's countenance fell. Then he exclaimed: "By heavens! I will go alone, if General Sherman don't forbid. I will ask him right away."

"He will only laugh at you, just as General Stanley did at me. Reckon it is a foolish idea."

But Craig was not convinced. He firmly believed that if permitted he could find out what had become of Fred. But when he broached the subject to General Sherman, he took the same view of the matter as General Stanley.

"Why, Sergeant," he exclaimed, "you are old enough not to get such a foolish idea in your head. Captain Shackelford is either dead or confined in the prison-pen at Macon."

"Probably not in Macon, General, but in Andersonville," answered Craig, respectfully.

"Andersonville is for private soldiers only," replied the general; "officers are not confined there."

"I am aware of that, General: but during the

raid both Captain Shackelford and Lieutenant Darling removed all insignia of rank from their clothing; both wore the uniforms of privates, and it was agreed between us that if captured we would know and address them as privates. It was thought that it might go hard with Captain Shackelford if he should be captured and be known; the rebels are too well informed of too many of his doings."

"You are right, Sergeant," replied the general; "and what you have told me has greatly relieved my mind. The fact is I have been greatly worried over what might become of Shackelford if he fell into the rebels' hands. But that you can do him any good by entering the rebel lines in search of him is preposterous."

Craig looked foolish, but mustered up courage enough to say, "But, General, you have heard how Darling and Smith followed Captain Shackelford and rescued him from the hands of Forrest?"

"Yes; but that was entirely different. If Shackelford is in Andersonville, it would take an army to rescue him."

So it came to pass that neither Craig nor Hugh went forth to rescue Fred from the hands of his captors, and both were finally wise enough to see the absurdity of what they proposed.

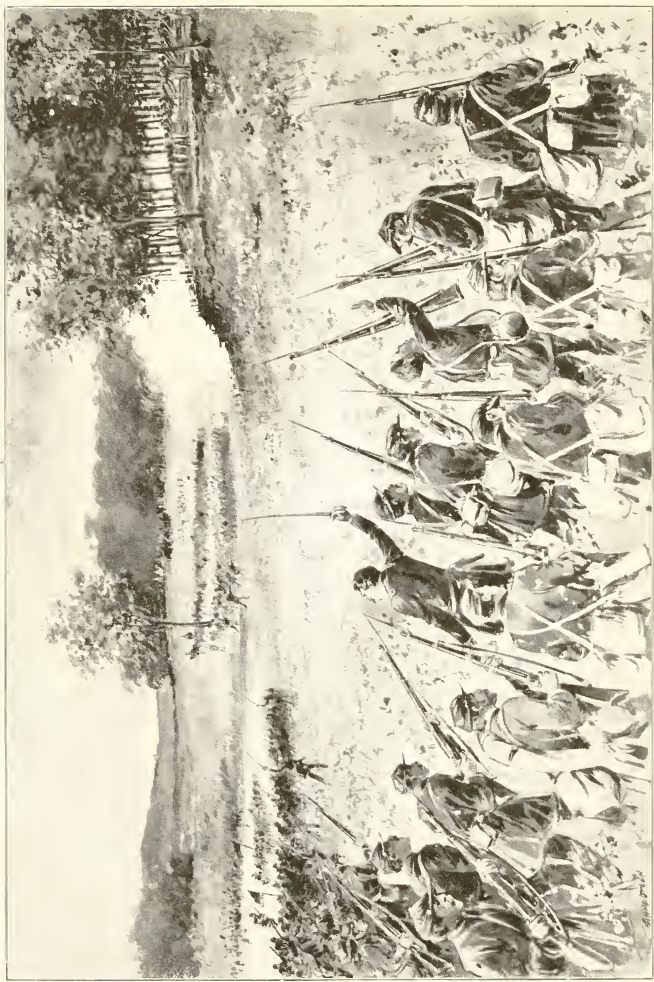
Days passed, and still Sherman made little progress in his attempt to take Atlanta. The north began to fear that Atlanta, like Richmond, was well nigh impregnable. The enemies of the

government throughout the North, and their names were legion, began to croak, saying that neither Richmond nor Atlanta would ever fall.

Then came that wonderful flank movement to the rear of Atlanta. To make this movement, General Sherman had to give up his line of intrenchments around the city, and Hood was led to believe that Sherman was falling back. Atlanta went wild with delight over the thought, and a jubilee was held in the abandoned Yankee works. Hood persisted in his belief that Sherman was falling back, until it was too late to strike Sherman a blow when he was on the move.

When the news was brought General Hood that Jonesboro was threatened, he thought it was only another cavalry raid, and ordered Hardee's corps to Jonesboro to protect the railroad. Hardee telegraphed that a large force of infantry was threatening him, and Hood sent Stephen D. Lee's corps to reinforce Hardee, with orders to attack and drive the Yankees into the Flint River, whatsoever the cost.

In obedience to this order, Lee and Hardee charged the Army of the Tennessee, and were bloodily repulsed. General Hood now completely lost his head. He would not believe that Sherman's whole army was in his rear. He thought that the movement to Jonesboro was only a trick to induce him to send most of his army there, and that then Sherman would come out of his hiding-place and storm and take Atlanta. Acting on



TWO BATTERIES AND A THOUSAND PRISONERS WERE CAPTURED.

These generals were slow to move, and courier after courier was sent to hurry them up. Even General Thomas became excited, and mounting his horse, galloped away to hurry up Stanley.

"Great God!" cried General Sherman; "see Thomas! he is actually running his horse. I never saw him do it before."

But General Thomas did the same thing at Peach Tree Creek, where, however, General Sherman did not see him. At last Schofield and Stanley were on the move. But precious time had been wasted; Schofield did not get into the fight at all, and Stanley was able to bring only one division to the field



GEN. JEFFERSON C. DAVIS.

before darkness fell. Made desperate by the delay, General Thomas ordered General Jefferson C. Davis to charge with the Fourteenth Corps alone. This the corps did in the most gallant style, making the only successful charge that was made on the enemy's breastworks during the campaign. Two batteries and a thousand prisoners (Govan's brigade) were captured. An hour more of daylight, and the whole of Hardee's corps would have been doomed. It would have been, anyway, if the Army of the Tennessee had only been ordered to charge at the same time that the Fourteenth Corps did. As it was, Hardee crept away during the darkness, leaving his dead and wounded on the field.

During the night heavy explosions were heard in the direction of Atlanta. The distant, heavy roar startled the soldiers, and caused much uneasiness among the officers. Had Hood attacked the Twentieth Corps in their intrenchments on the Chattahoochee? But through the darkness swift couriers were speeding from General Slocum, the commander of the Twentieth Corps, to General Sherman, saying that General Hood was blowing up his magazines, depots, and locomotives, preparatory to evacuating Atlanta. The Gate City of the South was abandoned.

The news flew through the army like wildfire. The Union soldiers heard, and all the hardships and dangers through which they had passed were forgotten. Cheer after cheer swept along the lines, rising and falling in great waves of sound. Men danced and shouted as if they had suddenly gone insane. Bronzed veterans embraced each other, the tears running down their cheeks. The goal for which they had been striving for four months had been gained. The prize for which thousands had yielded up their lives had been won.

Captain Hugh Raymond so forgot his dignity that he turned three somersaults in swift succession. But many of the officers did worse; they got hilariously drunk over the glorious news. This latter folly, as will be seen, bore bloody fruit.

The Fourth Corps was ordered in pursuit, and came up with the enemy at Lovejoy. Here a charge was made by a small force, and nearly five hundred

soldiers fell. The charge would never have been made if it had not been ordered by a drunken general. In fact, it would have been better for Sherman's army if it had never moved beyond Jonesboro. But everything was forgotten in the glorious fact that Atlanta was captured.

All through the North the telegraph flashed the tidings. Bells rang and cannon thundered. The people shouted themselves hoarse over the glad news. Those who had watched and prayed wept tears of joy. The croakers for a time were silent. But while the North rejoiced, the South wept bitter tears of anguish. So it is in this world; what brings joy to one brings grief to another; what is life to one is death to another.

Yes, Atlanta had fallen; but the soldiers well knew that their work was not done. The Confederate army was not destroyed. The gray veterans, ragged, hungry, defeated at every turn, still faced their victors defiantly. Many a brave man was yet to fall before the end came.

CHAPTER X.

PRINCE AND THE MAJOR.

“HELLO, Yanks!”

This was the salutation given to Fred and Darling by the Confederates as they galloped up to them.

“Good morning, gentlemen,” blandly replied Fred. “What can I do for you, though truth to tell, I am not glad to see you?”

“Well, you are a cool one, Yank, anyway. The first thing you can do is to hand over them shootin’-irons of yours.”

Fred did as requested, and then remarked: “Anything more I can do for you? You see it gives me great pleasure to oblige you. You have such an insinuating way of asking a favor, I could not think a moment of refusing.”

“Thank you, Yank, thank you. You are very perlite. It gives me great happiness to meet you. But how about this fellow?” turning to Darling, who was sitting on his dead horse, looking the picture of disgust and misery.

“Oh! my comrade there? He is feeling a trifle down in the mouth. His horse was so unfortunate as to drop dead, and some careless fellow shooting at random put a ball through his arm.”

“So, so!” answered the Confederate, with a grin. “It do beat all how heedless some fellows air. But, Yanks, we air jest pinin’ for your company, so you might as well come along.”

Here the commander of the company, a fine-looking young captain, rode up. “Ah, Sergeant!” he exclaimed to the soldier talking with Fred, “so you have bagged two more, have you? They will make about fifty to the credit of the company; a pretty nice morning’s work.”

Just then his eye fell on Prince. He uttered an exclamation of surprise, and dismounting, carefully examined the horse. Then he turned abruptly to Fred, and asked, “Who is the owner of this horse?”

“I am, or rather was,” answered Fred, giving the officer a military salute.”

“You, sir—you? Are you an officer?”

“No, Captain; just a humble private.”

“But who used to own that horse—what officer did you get him of?”

“I got him from no one, Captain. I raised him from a colt.”

The captain eyed Fred critically for a moment, and then said: “I was not aware that privates in your army furnished their own horses, much less a Kentucky thoroughbred like this horse.”

Then turning to a lieutenant of his company, he said: “Chalmers, as sure as there is a God in heaven, that is the horse which nearly cost me my life on Lookout Mountain, just before Chickamauga.

I cannot be mistaken. And," he added, looking at Fred steadily, "this is the fellow who shot me. I know him now, but he wore a Captain's uniform then; I can swear to that. How is it now"—addressing Fred—"are you masquerading as a private?"

Fred's feelings can be imagined as he listened to this speech of the captain. Yes, he now knew that the officer before him was the young lieutenant he had shot on the mountain-side as he was returning from carrying dispatches to General McCook. He supposed that he had left him dying, but here he was alive and apparently well. Fred hardly knew what to say or do, he was so entirely taken by surprise. But the officer relieved him by saying: "Look here, Yank, let me introduce myself. I am Captain Wilber Chambers of the Fourth Georgia Cavalry. That was a warm reception you gave me on old Lookout. Surely you remember the circumstance."

Yes, Fred remembered only too well, but would it do for him to admit it? He could see no other way. Captain Chambers knew him too well; so putting a bold face on the matter, he extended his hand to the captain, and replied:

"So you are the young lieutenant I met on the side of Lookout. Captain Chambers, I can truly say I was never more happy to meet a man in the world. I have carried a heavy heart from that day to this on your account, for I have always supposed your wound was mortal. I am Charles Bailey of

the Third Kentucky Cavalry. My horse here, Prince, I raised from a colt, and I am greatly attached to him. I received permission from the government to take him with me in the service. Owing to his fleetness, I have mostly been employed as a scout or acting as orderly for some general. I was acting as such the day I met you on Lookout."

"But you wore a captain's uniform then," broke in Captain Chambers; "I am sure of it."

"Quite true. In my duties as scout I frequently wore an officer's uniform. By doing so I commanded more respect from any chance parties of our soldiers I might meet. That day on Lookout I could have escaped from you by leaving Prince. It was for the horse I fought. But the fortune of war has now placed me in your power. Although it is the saddest word I ever spoke, Captain, allow me to present you with my horse. A better one you will not find in the army. Prince, your new master."

Placing the bridle in Captain Chambers's hand, Fred continued: "Captain, as I do this, I have one request to make of you. When this war is over, if we be all alive, will you not allow me to purchase Prince back? I will pay you double what he is worth."

Fred would have said more, but a big lump arose in his throat, and he turned away to hide his emotion.

"Bailey," responded the captain, "I fully appre-

ciate your situation and your feelings. I can realize what it costs you to give up such a horse to an enemy. But in this let me be your friend. If our lives are spared and the horse comes through all right, it will give me great pleasure to grant your request."

"Thank you, Captain, thank you," replied Fred, with a full heart; "and this after I nearly took your life."

"Don't let that trouble you," answered the captain, with a laugh. "I bear you no ill will for that day's work on the mountain. For one Yank, and he a mere boy, to defeat four Confederates, killing one and disabling the other three, was a feat worthy of a hero. It was one of the neatest things I ever saw done. If you are not an officer, so much the worse for your government. But we must be going. Bailey, I will let you have the pleasure of riding your horse until we make camp."

"Thank you," replied Fred; "but let my wounded comrade here ride him."

"Plenty of spare horses," answered Chambers, "in camp. We have captured several hundred from you fellows. Here, Johnson," turning to one of his men, "let this wounded Yank ride your horse until we get back where the captured horses are."

So Fred mounted Prince once more, but his heart was as heavy as lead, for the thought was continually in his mind that it was the last ride he would ever take on the back of his beloved steed.

The party soon came to where the captured pris-

oners and horses had been gathered together. The Confederates were in high feather, and loudly boasted that not a single member of the raiding party would escape. But their boasts quickly came to an end when a Confederate trooper dashed up and reported a large force of Yankees coming.

The prisoners and captured horses were hastily removed into the woods, where they were left under a strong guard. The prisoners were told that if they made the least outcry or attempted to escape, they would be shot down without mercy. The remaining Confederates formed a line of battle to oppose the advancing Yankees.

The Federals did not halt at the display of force before them, but charged, and went through the Confederate lines like a whirlwind. The force was that of Colonel Adams, which had become separated from the brigade of Colonel Capron. The men were not looking for victories, but for escape; so after cutting their way through the Confederate line, they continued their retreat.

"I thought," drily remarked Fred to a sergeant who was guarding them, "that you told me you were going to capture every Yankee on the raid. Why, you let that Yankee force ride over you as if you were so many cattle."

The sergeant shrugged his shoulders, and contented himself by saying that they would treat the escaping force the same way they had treated Capron's before they were through with them.

Captain Chambers soon returned to take charge

of the prisoners, but he was not in the best of humor. His company had been ridden over, and he had lost several men.

"You fellows fight like the devil yet," he growled to Fred; "and we thought we had you completely demoralized."

"That brigade you were fighting," answered Fred, "will reach our lines all right, see if it don't."

"I doubt that," answered Captain Chambers; but he did not argue the question.

Fred, with the other prisoners, was taken to Athens, where he turned Prince over to Chambers, or rather attempted to. Just as the captain was about to take possession of the horse, a Major Kenyon, the quartermaster of the division, put in an appearance, and claimed Prince as captured property.

Major Kenyon was a handsome, dashing officer, about thirty years of age. But he was pompous, overbearing, and excessively vain, and was generally disliked by those under him. Captain Chambers, while at one time acting as quartermaster of his regiment, had had some trouble with him, and there was not the best of feeling between the two men.

"You can't have that horse," the major said, crustily, to Chambers; "he must be turned over with the rest of the captured property."

"But, Major Kenyon," answered the captain, "it is customary to replenish mounts out of captured property. Mr. Bailey here, the owner of the

horse, kindly presented him to me, seeing I once nearly lost my life in trying to capture him."

"What has a captured Yank to do with what becomes of his horse?" snapped the major.

Captain Chambers's face flamed with anger, and he was on the point of making a hot reply, when some soldier, a little in the rear, sang out: "Oh, Major Kenyon wants the hoss himself. Trust to a quartermaster for taking the best of everything."

"Arrest that man! Arrest that man!" cried the major, angrily. But no one knew who it was that yelled, and the cries of derision which greeted the failure of the search did not tend to appease the major's rage, and he ordered Captain Chambers to turn over the horse at once or consider himself under arrest. Just then the colonel commanding the regiment came up, and Captain Chambers appealed the matter to him.

"I well remember," said the colonel, "that episode on Lookout, which nearly cost Captain Chambers's life. At that time I promised him the horse if he could capture him. He has at last accomplished the feat; but, Captain," and he laughed, "it has taken you nearly a year to do it. The fact that the Yankee owner of the horse has given him to Chambers gives the captain no valid claim to him. But, Major," and he turned to Kenyon, "it would be a neat thing to let Chambers have the horse, and I trust you will raise no objections."

"But I have objections," growled the major.

"I know my duty and intend to do it. Captain Chambers cannot have that horse."

This remark was greeted with groans by the men. This angered the major still more. "I think," he continued, sarcastically, "Captain Chambers should say as little as possible about that affair on Lookout. Here is this stripling, this mere boy," and he turned to Fred, "who single-handed outfought the captain and three of his men, killing and wounding the entire four. I see nothing in that affair to be proud of, or why it should give Captain Chambers a claim on the horse."

Captain Chambers flushed with anger. "Major Kenyon," he exclaimed, "if by this you insinuate anything against my courage, I shall demand the satisfaction due from one gentleman to another."

"Come, gentlemen," broke in Fred, "there is no need of quarreling. I think Major Kenyon does not understand the case, and when he does he will promptly apologize to Captain Chambers. That officer is not one whit to blame for what happened on Lookout. I shot him from ambush; he had no chance."

"Who asked you for your opinion, you Yankee sneak?" snarled the major. "I have not impugned, and do not intend to impugn, the courage of Captain Chambers; but I do claim he should not be rewarded for allowing himself to be ambushed by such a sneaking little cuss as you."

"You talk bravely to a prisoner," quietly

responded Fred; "if I were free, you would be the last one to insult me."

"I would, would I? Why? you puppy you!"

"Because you would not dare."

"You insolent cur! I have a mind to chastise you," and he raised his hand threateningly.

"Major Kenyon, I am ashamed of you," exclaimed the colonel.

"A happy thought struck Fred. "Really, Major," he remarked, tauntingly, "I believe you had better let Captain Chambers have the horse. Prince is rather particular who rides him. I doubt if he would let you."

At this there was a great laugh, for if there was one thing Major Kenyon was proud of it was his horsemanship, and he was proud of showing it off on reviews.

The major grew purple in the face. "What do you mean, you Yankee whelp?" he roared. "Do you mean I am not a fit person to ride a horse that a dirty Yankee private has ridden, or I don't know enough to ride one?"

"I mean," replied Fred, with an imperturbable countenance, "that Prince might throw you and hurt you. You see I am careful of your bones, Major."

"Throw me! throw me! the best rider in the division! When he does that, Captain Chambers may have him. I will show you whether he can throw me or not"; and with these words he vaulted into the saddle.

Prince looked at Fred, but Captain Shackelford turned away as if he had no further interest in the matter, and the horse started off as gentle as a plow-horse.

“There, Chambers, you have lost your horse,” remarked a brother officer; and it is to be feared that Captain Chambers swore under his breath.

“Why, he is a dandy,” called back the major; “the finest horse I was ever on; as easy as a rocking-chair, and as gentle as ‘Mary’s little lamb.’ He will throw me, will he? Ha! ha! that’s a good one”; and he cantered gayly away.

So quiet was Prince that the major was entirely at ease, and completely off his guard. Fred let the major get a hundred yards or so away, when he suddenly gave a peculiar shrill, sharp whistle. The effect was magical. Prince gave a prodigious bound, and wheeled like a flash, sending the major rolling in the dust. The horse came running back, and stopped by Fred, trembling with excitement.

The Confederates at first did not comprehend the trick played, but when they did, they made the air ring with their cheers, and crowded around Prince in admiration.

As for the major, although he had been stunned, he was not seriously hurt, but his pride had received a nearly fatal wound. His wrath was fearful, and he came limping back, with his revolver drawn, swearing he would shoot both the horse and his dirty Yankee owner.

“No, you don’t,” shouted the men; and the



PRINCE GAVE A PRODIGIOUS BOUND, AND WHEELED
LIKE A FLASH.

colonel sternly ordered the irate major to put up his revolver, at the same time trying to suppress his laughter.

“I will have justice,” shouted the major, almost beside himself.

“Well,” responded the colonel, “here comes the general; appeal to him.”

General Iverson, the commander of the brigade, rode up and demanded the cause of the excitement.

“Why,” said the colonel, “Major Kenyon here has so forgotten himself that he not only wants to shoot one of the finest horses we have captured, but one of the prisoners as well—and all because the horse threw him.”

“What!” exclaimed the general: “Kenyon thrown! I am surprised.”

“It was a trick—a mean, dirty, Yankee trick,” shouted the major; and of course the general had to hear the whole story.

When General Iverson was fully enlightened as to all the facts, he said: “I am surprised that you gentlemen would think of quarreling over such a thing as a captured horse. Major, I reckon you had better make the best out of a mighty good joke this young Yankee has played on you, and let Captain Chambers have the horse, as you promised. It was a fair wager, and you lost.”

The men started to raise a cheer, but were promptly checked by a look from the general.

The general then said, sternly: “Major Kenyon—and you, Captain Chambers—don’t let me

hear of you quarreling over this horse; if you do, it will be the worse for you, remember. As for you, Captain Chambers, take your company and thoroughly scout the country in the wake of the retreating Yankees. The woods are full of fugitives, and you should be able to pick up many more prisoners. Follow them, if necessary, clear to the Chattahoochee River. As for you, Major Kenyon, see that all the captured property, including horses, is gathered together and taken to Athens." And with these words, the general turned and rode away.

Major Kenyon looked anything but pleased over the turn affairs had taken, and with a countenance as black as a thunder-cloud went about his duties.

Captain Chambers commanded his company to fall in, and then riding to where Fred stood, said: "Bailey, I shall never forget that trick you played on the major. It was great—and what a horse! Why, he knows more than many a man! Be assured he will have a kind master. Blamed if I don't feel like a thief in taking him from you. But I believe you would rather let me have him than Major Kenyon."

"That I would," answered Fred; "you are a gentleman; I can't say as much of the major."

"Bailey," said the captain, in a low tone, "I wish I could keep you out of Andersonville; but I can't. It's hell there. You may hear from me, but I don't see how I can do anything for you now. Good-bye."

“Hold a minute,” said Fred, and going up to Prince, he threw his arms around his neck and gently stroked his glossy side. “Good-bye, old fellow, good-bye,” he whispered, and turned away with a sore heart; and try as hard as he might to keep them back, the tears started unbidden to his eyes. The rough troopers saw and understood. They thought all the more of Fred for the love he bore his horse. When Fred next looked up, nothing was seen down the road except a cloud of dust. Prince was gone.

CHAPTER XI.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

THE prisoners were kept at Athens for two or three days, and their number was continually augmented by the fugitives picked up by the scouting parties of the Confederates. These days of rest were of great benefit to Darling, who was rapidly recovering from his wound.

As for Fred, they passed wearily, and were full of anxiety. The loss of Prince was a sore affliction; it gave him almost as much pain as the thought of being a prisoner. Then there was the continual dread that he might be recognized. The trick that he had played on Major Kenyon made him a notorious character, and he was continually being pointed out as "the Yankee who did up Major Kenyon." There was also danger that he might be inadvertently betrayed by some of the prisoners; but he had managed to let them know he did not wish to be known in his true character, and each and every one respected his wishes. Fred was in more danger than he thought. Major Kenyon had been excessively guyed by his brother officers over being thrown, and he vowed to get even with the Yankee who had played him the trick. His was

a nature that never forgave an injury to his pride. He also believed that for some reason Fred was concealing his true character. Privates did not ride such horses as Prince. He also had heard of Fred, and knew something of his exploits. Fred also greatly resembled his father, except in complexion, and Major Kenyon had been quick to notice the likeness. He was well acquainted with General Shackelford, and believed he could not be mistaken. The evening after Fred's capture, Major Kenyon, in conversation with a brother officer, said: "Colonel, you may think it is all spite, but I tell you the case of that young Yankee calling himself Bailey should be carefully looked into. I do not believe his name is Bailey, neither do I believe he is a private. Privates don't own and ride such horses as he rode, and which he acknowledged to be one of his own raising."

"There is a great deal of truth in what you say," replied the colonel; "but if the fellow is a Yankee officer, what object can he have in concealing the fact? It is far better to be known as an officer than it is to be sent to that hellhole of Andersonville as a private."

"I will tell you," responded the major, "if you will promise to keep mum until I get ready to strike. If I am correct in my suspicions, there will be a sensation. I cannot act for a few days, as I have to report to Atlanta now. While there I shall lay the matter before General Hood, and I think I shall have no trouble in getting full authority to act."

“You speak in riddles,” answered the colonel, “and have excited my curiosity. I readily give you the promise of silence that you ask. Now, what is it?”

“It is just this: One of the best known and most daring scouts of the Yankee army is known to ride just such a trained horse as this Bailey’s. This same scout has frequently entered our lines wearing a Confederate uniform, thus making himself amenable to arrest and conviction as a spy. You have heard of that party of Yankees found in our lines just before Kenesaw was evacuated, and of their daring escape?”

“Yes; it was the talk of the army. A more desperate act I do not know of being performed during the war.”

“There is no doubt that this fellow who calls himself Bailey was the leader of that party. That he is accustomed to desperate deeds is shown by the way he wiped out Captain Chambers and his little party on Lookout. I have no love for Chambers, but we must acknowledge he is a brave man. This Bailey is afraid of getting his neck stretched, therefore represents himself as a private.”

“You may be right,” exclaimed the colonel; “but where does the great sensation you spoke of come in?”

“I am coming to that. If I am correct in my suspicions, who do you think this Bailey really is?”

“I have no means of knowing.”

“He is no less a personage than Captain Fred-

eric Shackelford, chief of General Sherman's scouts and spies, and a son of General Richard Shackelford of our army."

"You surprise me! You don't mean to tell me that our General Shackelford has a son in the Yankee army? Impossible!"

"It is not only possible, but a fact. The boy nearly broke his father's heart. He ran away from home and joined Nelson almost at the beginning of the war, and was of great help to that renegade in holding Kentucky in the Union. His father disowned him, but I have heard that after Shiloh they became reconciled. The boy saved his life, or something to that effect, at that battle."

"You may be mistaken in thinking that this Bailey is his son."

"I think not. You know General Shackelford, do you not?"

"Know him? Who does not know him? He has the reputation of being one of our best fighting generals."

"Well, in the morning take a good look at this young Bailey, and see if you cannot see a resemblance to the general."

"I will do so; but if what you think is true, the general will not thank you for exposing his son, and perhaps bringing him to an ignominious death. Better let him rot in Andersonville unknown; he can do us no more harm."

"Never!" replied Kenyon, with an oath. "I will not only have my revenge, but I will gain

a colonel's commission before this thing is through. General Shackelford is not in high favor at Richmond, and is still less so with General Hood. General Shackelford is well known as one of the strongest supporters of General Johnston, and he has condemned the course of General Hood in the severest terms. General Hood believes that his failure at Peach Tree Creek was owing to the half-hearted support given to the movement by General Shackelford. I shall have no trouble in getting General Hood's consent to probe this matter to the bottom."

"Major, you never let up on any one if you get after him," laughed the officer.

"Not if he is a sneaking Yankee who has taught his horse tricks to make a laughing-stock of me. Hark! just hear that!"

Out in the darkness a soldier was singing the following doggerel at the top of his voice:

"Majah Kenyon tho't he could ride a hoss,
Ride a hoss—ride a hoss,
He got on, only to tumble off,
Tumble off—tumble off."

A dozen voices took up the words, and the camp rang with the refrain.

Major Kenyon was beside himself with rage, and rushing to the officer of the guard, he asked that the camp be searched, and every one of the offending singers be arrested and tied up by the thumbs. The guards sent out failed to find the guilty persons, and all that Major Kenyon could do was to nurse his wrath.

It was fortunate for Fred that the major's conversation with the officer had been overheard by the sergeant who had charge of the prisoners, and to whom had been assigned the duty of making out the list of their names, rank, and regiments. This sergeant was not only a firm friend of Captain Chambers, but he cordially hated Major Kenyon, because he had once reported him for some dereliction of duty, which nearly caused him the loss of his stripes. The sergeant came secretly to Fred, told him what he had heard, and said: "I don't care a picayune whether you are Captain Shackelford or not, but Major Kenyon will never let up on you. He has made up his mind to be revenged on you, and nothing would please him better than to get the best of Captain Chambers. It is fortunate for you that the major will be absent for some time, and I will tell you how you can get ahead of him. I have the making up of the list of prisoners. If you say so, I will change your name and regiment. If you once get into Andersonville under an assumed name, it will puzzle Major Kenyon to find you. I am willing to do this to get even with him. He tried to get me reduced to the ranks once, and if I can get even with him, I am going to do it."

Fred thanked the sergeant for his kindness, and when the rolls were made out he appeared on them as Frank Hetrick of Company K, Sixth Indiana Cavalry.

Fred never forgot Sergeant Henry Devere for

the favor shown. The prisoners were kept at Athens for three days, and then they were started on their march for Macon. Owing to the destruction of the railroads during the raid, the prisoners had to "foot it" all the way to Macon. The weather was very warm, and the cavalry boys not being accustomed to walking, the march was a very severe one for them. But when they complained, all the comfort they received was: "If you blamed Yanks hadn't tore up the railroad, you-uns wouldn't have to 'foot it.' Now, walk on, blame you."

It was a dusty, footsore, forlorn cavalcade which entered Macon after nearly a week's march. The sidewalks were crowded with citizens rejoicing to see that so many of the raiders had come to grief. On the porches of the houses stood many fair daughters of the South, but in their faces was no pity for the miserable prisoners who were marching through the street. Fred was surprised at the violent remarks which he heard fall from the lips of some of these fair ones. As they were passing one of the finest residences of the city, Fred noticed a group of young ladies standing on the porch, who seemed to be especially delighted at their forlorn appearance.

"If I had my way," he heard one say, "I would hang every one."

"What would become of their poor souls if they were hanged?" laughed another.

"Souls! souls! I don't believe Yankees have

any souls. I wish they had, so they could burn—burn forever,” and the speaker stamped her little foot in fury.

Among these girls Fred thought he recognized a well-known face. He stared in amazement, and could scarcely believe his eyes. But he was not mistaken. Among that bevy of fair maidens stood his cousin, Kate Shackelford, who he thought was in Nashville. Kate Shackelford was the daughter of Fred's uncle, Colonel Charles Shackelford, who Fred had learned from a Confederate paper was severely wounded during the fighting in the Dallas woods. The home of Colonel Shackelford was in Nashville, and Fred had no knowledge that Kate had come south.

So astonished was he on seeing her, he could only stop and stare; but he was sharply brought to his senses by a prick from a bayonet and the rough command of a guard to move on.

Just then Kate caught sight of Fred. She uttered a little cry of surprise, started forward as if to speak, but stopped, pressed her hands to her heart, and stood white and breathless.

Seeing that he was recognized, Fred raised his hand and pressed his fingers to his lips. Kate saw and understood.

“What is it, Kate?” cried her merry companions. “What has startled you so? You look as if you had seen a ghost.”

“I—I thought I saw some one among the prisoners I knew, but I must have been mistaken.”

“A lover, Kate, a lover!” the girls cried in chorus. “We have heard you created havoc with the hearts of half the Yankee officers in Nashville. Who and what is he, Kate—a colonel or a general?”

Kate’s lips trembled. “Don’t, girls, don’t,” she exclaimed, in a faltering voice. “There is no lover of mine among those prisoners; but somehow I can’t help pitying those poor fellows; they have mothers, wives, and sisters.”

“Why, Kate, we thought you hated the Yankees worse than any of us. What has come over you?” they cried.

“I do hate them,” she cried; “but they are human; you girls seem to think they are not”; and she turned and fled to her room.

Her companions looked after her inquiringly. “She must have seen some one she knew,” they said; but they little guessed the true cause of Kate’s trepidation.

Intensely Southern as she was, there was nothing Kate would not have done to save Fred from the horrors of a prison-pen. Had he not reached a helping hand to her in her hour of need, when languishing in a Northern prison, convicted of being a spy? Yet, for some reason which she did not understand, she knew that Fred did not wish to be known. She would be careful, but she would—must see him. With Kate, to resolve was to act.

Still another surprise was in store for Fred. Standing in a group of officers lounging in front of a hotel, he recognized his uncle, and with him

a cousin, Captain Calhoun Pennington. This last discovery nearly took away his breath. Calhoun Pennington was not only his cousin, but had been his playmate from childhood. They were more like brothers than cousins. But Calhoun was as faithful to the South as Fred was to the Union. Early in the war Calhoun joined his fortunes with those of the celebrated raider, John H. Morgan, and greatly distinguished himself as one of his officers. During Morgan's raid in Ohio, Calhoun was desperately wounded and taken prisoner. On his recovery from his wound, he made his escape, and that was the last Fred had heard of him. But here he was in Macon, alive and well. Fred pulled his hat over his face, and passed them without being noticed.

The prisoners were corralled in a large cotton warehouse until cars could be procured to take them to Andersonville. As for Fred, he sought the farthest and darkest corner of the warehouse, wishing neither to see nor be seen. The curious gathered outside to see, many to taunt and revile.

At length there was quite a commotion at the door. A party of ladies wished to see the prisoners. Among them was Kate Shackelford.

With one of her sweetest smiles, Kate asked Captain Bainbridge, the officer in charge of the prisoners, if she might pass among them; she was quite sure there was one among them whom she knew, one who had rendered her an especial service in Nashville.

Captain Bainbridge was young; he had met

Kate, and greatly admired her; he would nearly have broken his neck to oblige her.

"I will have the prisoners fall in, Miss Shackelford," he said, "and then you can pass down the line and pick out your man."

So the order was given for the prisoners to fall in, and the ladies slowly passed down the line. Fred saw them coming, and muttered: "It's all up with me. I thought Kate would be wise enough to take a hint, but it is evident she was not."

But Kate was wiser than Fred thought. No sooner did her eyes rest on him, than she pointed at him, and said: "That's the one; but how—how provoking, his name has gone from me."

"Frank Hetrick, Miss Shackelford," said Fred, stepping forward, and standing at attention.

"Ah, yes!" replied Kate, with a smile; "I see you have not forgotten me, Frank. Your memory is better than mine. Captain, may I speak a moment to the prisoner in private?"

"Certainly, Miss Shackelford."

No sooner were Kate and Fred by themselves than she exclaimed: "Oh, Fred, Fred! how did you come here, and why are you masquerading under an assumed name?"

"Hush, Kate," said Fred; "don't speak my name so loud."

Then in as few words as possible he told her all that had happened, and why he had assumed the name of Frank Hetrick. He closed by saying: "You see, Kate, how important it is that my iden-

tity be concealed. This Major Kenyon will never rest until he exposes me. Now, Kate," he continued, "tell me all about yourself. How in the world did you come to be here?"

"I heard that father was terribly wounded, and I obtained permission to pass through the lines at Decatur. Cousin Calhoun met me a short distance from Decatur; he was with Roddy's command, and escorted me here. Father was here in the hospital at Macon. I am happy to say he has nearly recovered."

"But Calhoun—how did he come to meet you?" asked Fred. "How did you know he was with Roddy?"

Kate hesitated. "I—I saw him in Nashville, and made arrangements then—"

"There, Kate," interrupted Fred; "you need say no more; I understand."

"Oh, Fred!" almost sobbed Kate; "why will you and Calhoun expose yourselves to an ignoble death? Why not let some one else do this dangerous work?"

"Why did you, Kate?" softly asked Fred. "It is because we love the cause we think is right."

Kate's eyes shone. "Fred," she whispered, "I could die, die this minute, if it would make the South free." Then she exclaimed, passionately: "Fred, I cannot see you go to prison. You do not know, cannot realize what a dreadful place Andersonville is. I was down there two weeks ago. Oh! it's horrible, horrible!" and she shuddered.

"Kate, I must go. You must not try to do anything for me, for by so doing you might put the noose around my neck. Don't let your father, Calhoun, or even my own father, know you have seen me, Kate." And Fred's voice faltered as he asked, "Have you seen father?"

"No; he will not leave the front, even for a day. He has the name of being one of the best and bravest generals in the army. But it is whispered that General Hood does not like him; he is known to be a staunch friend of General Johnston."

"Poor father! how I should like to see him. But, Kate, we must not talk much longer. The sight of your face has done me good. If you get back to Nashville, you can tell Mabel Vaughn you have seen me—no one else. One thing more: If the records of Andersonville ever give the name of Frank Hetrick, Company K, Sixth Indiana Cavalry, as dead, you may know I am no more."

"Fred," and Kate blushed slightly as she asked the question, "how is Captain Hugh Raymond?"

"Alive and well the day before I left Atlanta. He is now on the staff of General Stanley, and is the same brave, jovial Hugh."

"He is an impertinent fellow. He—he wrote me a very foolish letter—as if I would correspond with a Yankee; but I reckon I settled him." But as she said it Kate looked anything but happy.

"I am sorry, Kate, that you would not even correspond with him. But remember the story we have concluded to tell. Now, good-bye."

“Good-bye, Fred, and may God bless you!” And Kate turned unconcernedly away, but her heart was full.

“You seem to take a good deal of interest in that young Yankee,” said Captain Bainbridge, as Kate thanked him for his kindness.

“I do,” quietly replied Kate. “He stood guard over our house at Nashville for a time. Once I—I was insulted by a drunken Yankee officer.”

“The villain!” exclaimed Captain Bainbridge. “I only wish I had been there; he wouldn’t have insulted you the second time.”

“This boy, this private,” continued Kate, “promptly knocked the officer down. You know enough of army regulations to realize the risk a private runs from striking an officer.”

“What came of it?” eagerly asked Captain Bainbridge.

“Nothing. The officer was ashamed to report the affair, so young Hetrick escaped; but I feel none the less grateful to him. I wish I could do something for him.”

“Miss Shackelford,” replied Captain Bainbridge, anxious to please her, “if I telegraph to Captain Wirz asking him as a favor to detail this young fellow outside the stockade, I think he will do it. He will get enough to eat outside and shelter, and that means a great deal at Andersonville.”

“Thank you,” replied Kate, sweetly. “I shall remember your kindness, Captain”; and she went her way, leaving the captain in a happy state of mind.

But Kate did not know whether she had done a wise thing for Fred or not. Would being detailed outside of the stockade make Fred more liable to detection? She did not know; she was afraid it would. But Captain Bainbridge said it meant food and shelter, and she was so glad for that.

As for Fred, no sooner was Kate gone than the prisoners crowded around him, clamoring to know who the beautiful young lady was, and what she wanted.

“Oh,” answered Fred, carelessly, “she is a young lady I rescued from the insults of a drunken soldier in Nashville. She always seemed very grateful for the services I rendered, and wanted to know if she could do anything for me.”

Kate and Fred had agreed on this story of the drunken soldier if questioned, so as to allay any suspicions of relationship. The story was also substantially true, as Fred had once severely chastised a soldier who had rudely accosted her on the street.

“Well, you are a lucky dog,” answered his questioners; “she is a beauty. Is she Union or Reb?”

“Reb, of course,” said Fred as he turned away, not wishing to continue the conversation further.

The next morning the prisoners were started for Andersonville. The same day Major Kenyon put in an appearance at Macon. The major was of a distinguished South Carolina family, and had been a power in the politics of his State before the war. He had seen General Hood, and had told

him of his suspicions concerning the soldier Bailey. General Hood, smarting under his successive defeats before Atlanta, and being greatly enraged over the criticisms of some of his generals, was more than willing to do anything that would wound General Shackelford, for he felt especially angered toward him. Major Kenyon had therefore received full authority to fully investigate the case of the soldier Bailey, and if he should prove to be Captain Shackelford, to arrest and hold him for trial.

When Major Kenyon learned that the prisoners had been shipped to Andersonville, he sent the following dispatch to Captain Wirz:

MACON, August 14, 1864.

TO CAPTAIN HENRY WIRZ,

Commanding at Andersonville:

Among the prisoners sent you to-day is a private Charles Bailey, Company B, Third Kentucky Cavalry. Hold him in arrest until I come, as I have good reason to suspect he is an officer, and a notorious Yankee spy. I will be down to-morrow to look into the matter.

MARION KENYON,

Major, C. S. A.

But a couple of hours earlier Captain Wirz had received the following telegram:

MACON, August 14, 1864.

CAPTAIN HENRY WIRZ,

Commanding at Andersonville:

Among the prisoners sent down to-day is private Frank Hetrick of Company K, Sixth Indiana Cavalry. If you will detail him on duty outside of the stockade, give him as good a position as you can, and show him every courtesy consistent with prison discipline, you will confer a great favor upon me, as well as upon one of the fairest ladies in Macon.

GUILFORD BAINBRIDGE,

Captain Commanding.

“Vell, vell!” muttered Wirz, scratching his head, when he received Major Kenyon’s telegram, “this peats all. Here is Major Kenyon vants me to keep one brisoner to hang, and Captain Bainbridge vants me to treat another like a shentleman.”

CHAPTER XII.

ANDERSONVILLE.

AMID the pine forests of southern Georgia is situated the little hamlet of Andersonville. Before the war it was unknown to the world; during the last year of the war it became a synonym for everything horrible; to-day it is sacred ground, where reposes the dust of nearly fourteen thousand Union soldiers.

During the summer and fall of 1864, nearly as many soldiers gave up their lives in Andersonville as were killed on the field of battle in both Grant's and Sherman's armies. No tongue can tell, no pen can describe, all the horrors of Andersonville. As well try to depict the misery of the infernal regions.

The train bearing the prisoners among whom was Fred drew up before the rickety station at Andersonville about noon. They were unloaded and formed into line, and the short march to the stockade began—a march which so many thousands took never to retrace.

Before the column entered the gate, it was halted, and a sergeant, a willing and servile tool of Wirz, known as "Wry Neck Smith," called in

a loud voice for Private Charles Bailey, of Company B, Third Kentucky Cavalry, to step to the front. Fred's heart gave a great bound, but no one responded to the invitation.

"Petter step out," sang out Captain Wirz, who held a telegram in his hand; "petter step out, if you know what is goot for you."

The prisoners looked inquiringly up and down the line, but no one stepped to the front.

"Call de roll," shouted Wirz, his face red with anger; "that tam spy can't escape by not answering to his name."

The roll was called, but to the astonishment of Wirz no such name as Charles Bailey appeared on the list. "Vell, das is strange," remarked Wirz; and glancing at another telegram, he handed it to Wry Neck Smith, saying: "Call this one. I will see if he is here."

"Private Frank Hetrick, Company K, Sixth Indiana Cavalry," sang out Smith.

To Fred that call was like reading his death-warrant. He felt his limbs grow weak, and there was a choking in the throat. But it was only for a moment; then, calm and collected, without the least show of excitement, he stepped three paces to the front and stood at attention.

"Sergeant," commanded Wirz, "march the rest of the brisoners into the stockade"; and Fred saw his comrades march away.

Darling, when he saw Fred called out, made a move as though he would join him, believing that

he was to be arrested as a spy, but he was jerked back into the ranks by a comrade.

“One step farther and you would have been shot,” whispered the comrade. “Didn’t you see one of the guards raise his gun?”

“It matters little to me if I am shot,” exclaimed Darling, “if any evil befalls the captain.”

But Darling had no time to see what was to be the fate of Fred, for he was hurried on, and the ponderous wooden gates—gates over which, as over the entrance of hell, should have been written, “All hope abandon, ye who enter here”—opened, and Fred’s comrades passed out of sight.

“Come with me,” grunted Captain Wirz to Fred; and he soon found himself in the private office of the captain. Here Fred learned, to his great astonishment, that instead of being considered a spy, he had been taken out of the ranks for the purpose of being shown especial favor.

“Shust give your barole not to try to escape,” said Captain Wirz, “and I vill give you one goot blace. You be one lucky dog. Captain Bainbridge says one fair lady asks that I use you vell.”

Fred knew at once that Kate had been interceding for him, and he felt grateful for what she had done. But could he accept the conditions? If he did, all hopes of his escape would be gone, and Darling would be left to his fate. No; he could never desert his faithful lieutenant, neither could he give up his hopes of escape. So he said: “If I understand rightly, for these privileges which you

propose giving me I am to sign a parole not to try to escape, or to help any one else to escape."

"Ja, that's it," answered Captain Wirz; "here is the parole."

"Captain," replied Fred, "I thank you very much for your kindness, and would accept your offer, if I felt that I could in honor; but I cannot forego any opportunity I might see to escape, neither can I desert my comrades. For these reasons, I must refuse to sign the parole."

"Vat! you not give your parole?" cried Wirz, in amazement.

"No, Captain, I will not; I will starve in the stockade with my comrades first," replied Fred, firmly.

"Then starve, you tam fool!" cried Wirz, in a rage. Calling to a guard, he said: "Here, take him, take the tam fool away; let him starve with the rest. Won't give your parole, eh? You will be glad to give it before many days."

Fred was at once hurried, and in no gentle manner, to the stockade. The gates opened, and then closed upon him. He was in Andersonville.

Never will Fred forget the sight that met his gaze. He caught his breath, and there was a mist before his eyes. Was he dreaming or dead? Was the scene before him real?

Spread out before him was a field of some eighteen or twenty acres, surrounded by a stockade of huge pine logs twenty feet high. Sixteen feet from this stockade was set a line of stakes, on top

of which was nailed a narrow strip. This was the dead line, beyond which no soldier could pass.

Through the center of the field there was a slimy bog, nearly a hundred yards wide, through which ran a small creek. On the land that was left—not more than thirteen or fourteen acres—were crowded and huddled together over thirty thousand human beings. But could these hairy, emaciated beings, with parchment-like skin drawn over their skeleton frames, be human?

Such misery, such utter hopelessness in the human countenance, Fred had never seen before. It was a sight which unnerved the stoutest hearts, and hundreds who entered Andersonville sank into a hopeless lethargy from which they never rallied.

But Fred had little time to see; he was hurried on by his guards until he reached the place where his comrades were. He was received as one from the dead. But when it was known that instead of being in any danger he had been offered special privileges, if he would give his parole not to escape, their wonder grew. Many called him foolish for not giving his parole, but Darling pressed his hand in silence; he understood.

As soon as he got an opportunity, he whispered: "Captain, I had given up hope. I thought it was all up with you; my sorrow was that I was not permitted to share whatever fate was yours, but I hardly understand it yet."

When Fred told him all that had passed between Captain Wirz and himself, Darling said: "It was

without doubt your Cousin Kate's work. The noble girl wanted to help you, and took that way. But, Captain, I do not believe you are yet out of danger. Major Kenyon telegraphing to Captain Wirz shows that he is hot after you. No doubt he will be down here looking for you, and when he finds out that you have disappeared, there will be a vigorous search for you. You can depend on that."

"What can be done?" asked Fred.

Darling thought a moment, and then said: "Captain, if I were you, I would change names and places with some one in another ninety. I believe it can be accomplished. You know there were enough of us to make several nineties."

"The suggestion is a good one," responded Fred, "and we will see what can be done."

They were fortunate enough to find a soldier who somewhat resembled Fred, and who readily consented to personate him; so the exchange was made, and for the time being Fred became William Goodspeed of Company C, Ninth Michigan Cavalry.

The change saved Fred from detection, for the next morning Captain Wirz, accompanied by Major Kenyon and a strong guard, entered the stockade.

On Major Kenyon's arrival at Andersonville, he was greatly surprised on being told by Captain Wirz that there was no such prisoner as Charles Bailey on the list. When Wirz told him of the other request he had received, asking him to show special favor

to one Frank Hetrick, and how he had refused to give his parole, Major Kenyon was at once interested, and asked to see this prisoner. Thus it was that they came to the stockade looking for Frank Hetrick.

So the ninety to which Fred had been assigned was ordered to fall in, and the roll was called. Darling was well aware of what was wanted, and set all his wits at work to see if he could not put the major on a false scent. Goodspeed was fully posted as to what he was to say, how he had rendered Miss Kate Shackelford a favor in Nashville, and no doubt it was she who, thinking to do him a favor, had had Captain Bainbridge send the telegram to Captain Wirz asking that he be detailed outside of the stockade.

When the name of Frank Hetrick was called, Goodspeed answered to the name. He was asked to step to the front. He did so with a trembling heart, but to all appearance was careless and unconcerned.

He was closely questioned, but told a straightforward story of his meeting with Kate Shackelford, and why she was interested in him, but he vehemently denied being Charles Bailey.

Major Kenyon was greatly disappointed. "Captain Wirz," he said, "while this soldier somewhat resembles Bailey, it is evident he is not the man I am in search of. Are you sure this is the one who answered to the name of Hetrick when you offered to detail him?"

“Ja, he is the one,” answered Wirz, who was not a very close observer.

The eye of Kenyon happened to rest on Darling. “Here, fellow,” he exclaimed, savagely, “were you not with the soldier who said his name was Bailey—the one who played that trick on me with his horse?”

“I was, Major,” promptly but respectfully answered Darling.

“What became of him?”

“He escaped, Major,” replied Darling, without a change of countenance.

“Escaped?” roared the major. “When? Where?”

“The night before we left Athens. I would have gone with him if I had not been wounded.”

“Why was his escape not reported?” asked the now thoroughly excited major.

“How do I know?” quietly answered Darling. “You surely do not expect that any of us would report the escape?”

Several other prisoners, taking their cue from what Darling said, spoke up and declared they were cognizant of Bailey’s escape, that he slipped through the guards the night before they left Athens. Two or three others had escaped the same way.

Major Kenyon was completely nonplused, but he was not satisfied. If what these prisoners reported was true, some one would suffer. But there was some mystery about it that he could not

fathom; he would probe the matter to the bottom. He believed that Miss Kate Shackelford and Captain Bainbridge could, if they wished, enlighten him. That Miss Shackelford should show so much interest in a private soldier who had simply rescued her from the insults of a drunken man seemed to him improbable. There was a stronger reason back of it than that.

Major Kenyon went back to Macon fully resolved to leave no stone unturned to find out the truth. He was now spurred on not only by his thoughts of revenge, but by the fact that he believed that a conspiracy existed to shield a Federal officer hiding under an assumed name, one who had been known to visit the Confederate lines dressed in a Confederate uniform. It would redound much to his credit if he could unearth and lay bare the whole thing, and might mean promotion. But he had no time to put his ideas into execution, for at Macon he found orders commanding him to report to General Wheeler forthwith, and for a few days his schemes had to be neglected.

Although for the time being the danger seemed to be past, it was thought advisable for Fred and Goodspeed not to change back, at least for some time.

The day had been so full of excitement that neither Fred nor Darling had paid a great deal of attention to the place they were in.

Night came. The day had been intolerably hot, and the suffering of the prisoners had been intense.

An almost unbearable stench arose from the ground. Fred lay down to sleep, but could not. On every side he could hear groans and prayers and oaths. The shrieks of the delirious rang in his ears; in vain he tried to shut out the awful sounds. Would the night never end!

“At night we pray for the morning,” said one of the prisoners to him, “and during the day we pray for the night.”

With Fred the light of the coming day was a relief.

“Dick,” he said to Darling, “this pen is death. We shall have to escape soon, or, like the miserable wretches around us, we shall be in such a condition we cannot escape.”

Darling glanced at the high stockade, the dead line, the guards ready and eager to shoot, the frowning cannon, and sighed.

“Captain,” he exclaimed, despairingly, “escape from this place seems impossible.”

“Yet we must escape,” answered Fred.

Rations were issued—and such rations! A huge wagon, filled with smoking, filthy, dirty mush made from corn ground cob and all, was driven into the stockade, and a given quantity was shoveled out to each ninety.

Nothing was provided the prisoners to draw their rations in; so the mush was shoveled on filthy blankets, in legs of old pantaloons tied at the bottom, and in some cases dumped on the ground.

Fred turned away in disgust. He had not yet been starved enough to eat the nasty stuff.

He and Darling walked down to the gate, where those who had died during the night were laid in a row, ready to be carted away. In that ghastly row Fred counted one hundred and twenty-seven wasted, emaciated bodies, looking scarcely human.

“Great heaven, Captain, must we come to this!” exclaimed Darling, in horror.

“No, Dick; we must get out of this hell, or die in the attempt.”

“Yes; it is a thousand times better to die by a bullet than as these poor fellows have died, by inches.”

Just then the crack of a gun was heard, and with a shriek a prisoner who had reached a little way across the dead line for a bit of a rag, fell dead.

“There is one poor fellow who is out of the power of the hellhounds,” grimly remarked Darling. “Captain, before I will stay here and starve, I will organize a force and charge the stockade. To die that way would be glorious.”

“Dick, if there is no other way, I am with you; but it would be almost impossible to put any courage into these starved, hopeless creatures.”

“Captain, we must lay our plans to escape while we have health and strength. We must even try to eat the filthy rations to keep up our strength, if possible. Let us look around a bit and see what we can discover.”

Slowly they made their way through the prison, carefully making note of all they saw.

"Look at that man, Captain," suddenly exclaimed Darling, pointing to a soldier who looked much older than most of the prisoners. His hair and beard were almost white, his body bent and emaciated.

But what was remarkable about the man was his countenance, which fairly beamed with happiness. So different was it from the countenances of the other prisoners that Fred stopped and gazed at him in wonder.

He was busily engaged in placing some little sticks around on the ground. So strange were his actions that Fred accosted him.

"Ah! gentlemen," he exclaimed, with a pleasant smile, "I am glad to see you. Will you not do me the honor of dining with me? Here, Anna, darling, set chairs for the gentlemen. We are going to have quite a feast to-day. Why, Maggie, what are you laughing at? Have some soup, gentlemen. No? Fish, then. Now take a slice of this roast beef; it's superb. This coffee is delicious. No one can make coffee like my Anna."

Thus he went on from dish to dish, all the time keeping up a conversation with different members of his family.

A great lump arose in Fred's throat, and tears came into his eyes. It was more pathetic than even the groans and death-struggles of the dying.

"He has been going on like this for a week," whispered a comrade; "yet he is happy, perfectly happy, for he imagines himself continually sur-

rounded by his family. Poor fellow! he will not last long."

He did not. Two days afterwards he lay in the long row of dead by the gate, ready to be carted out.

Sick at heart, Fred and Darling went on to the bog in the center of the pen, through which ran the little brook. What they saw was so indescribably horrible they turned and fled.

The whole muddy, slimy swamp, nearly a hundred yards wide, seemed to be alive, moving and undulating like some monster jelly-fish of a dirty whitish color. The whole swamp was a mass of maggots, and from it arose a most horrible stench.

"Great heavens!" gasped Fred; "how can men live in this place?"

As they walked back toward the gate, a commotion attracted their attention. A being that once had been a stalwart man, but now was a living skeleton, was pleading to go outside to see his wife. Fred saw at a glance that he was delirious with fever.

"Just let me go for one minute, one little minute," he pleaded. "I will not run away; I will come right back. Just let me look into her eyes and kiss her, and tell her how much I love her, before I die. There! there! don't you hear her? She is begging to come to me. On her knees she is weeping and praying to come. Stand back, I say! Unhand me!" And with the strength of

the maniac he broke from those who were holding him and rushed across the dead line.

“Don’t shoot! don’t shoot! he is crazy!” shouted a thousand voices; but the report of a rifle rang out, and the poor fellow lay writhing in the sand in his death agony.

“A thirty days’ furlough for me,” laughed the guard, as he blew the smoke out of his gun amid the oaths and execrations of ten thousand voices.

“Can these guards be men, or are they demons?” asked Darling.

“The real demons are in Richmond,” answered Fred, with compressed lips.

Turning away from this pitiful spectacle, Fred and Darling were startled by a sudden cry of mingled surprise and joy, and a man with long, grizzled hair and beard, a parchment-like skin drawn over his bones, and deep-set eyes that seemed to burn like coals of fire in his head, rushed up and seized each of them by the hand.

Fred looked long and earnestly in his face, and then he had his arms around him, crying: “Smith! Smith! It’s John Smith!”

“Yes,” answered the old man, “it’s John Smith, of ole Kentuck. Oh, Captain, I kin die now I hev set eyes on yer once mo’.”

Then dropping Fred’s hand, he stepped back and groaned: “O God! O God! What war I sayin’? Glad to see yer heah? Oh, no, no! Captain, how did yer ever cum heah in this hellhole?”

“Hush!” exclaimed Fred; “don’t call me cap-



“DON’T SHOOT! DON’T SHOOT! HE IS CRAZY!”

tain; call me Fred. But tell me what has happened to you since that night we parted on Pigeon Mountain, before the battle of Chickamauga."

"Thar is not much to tell," answered Smith. "Just before I reached Negley's lines that mornin' I run plump onto a party of rebs. I cut for it, but a ball thro' the ankle brought me down, an' I war a prisoner. I war first taken to Libby, then Belle Isle, then Salisbury, and last April I war brought heah. That's all. Dick, I see you got away; did you git thro' all right?"

"I got through, but was sorely wounded. The captain and I have had many a talk about you, and wondered what became of you. We missed you, Smith, and for months never went on a scout without wishing you were with us."

"That we did," responded Fred; "but, my old comrade, how you must have suffered."

"It does not matter much, Captain. You know I am only John Smith, John Smith of ole Kentuck; but you, Captain, you—oh, how I hate to see you heah! Yet it has done my ole eyes good to see yer."

"Smith, is there no way of escaping?"

The old man shook his head. "A few hev got away," he answered, "but most of them air caught an' brought back. I got away once, but the dogs treed me. I hev bin thinkin' of tryin' it agin—'bout made up my mind to—in fact, was to try it to-morrow."

"But how do you think of escaping?" asked Fred. "You look too feeble to bear fatigue."

“If I kin only git out of heah and die free, I shall die happy,” the old man answered. Then he told them how he hoped to gain his freedom. As Fred and Darling listened they stared in amazement.”

“But Smith, Smith, that is horrible!” exclaimed Fred. “And will it work?”

“It has worked in a few cases,” answered Smith, “an’ it may work in mine; but the rebs air a leetle mo’ keerful now. But I won’t try it, if yo’ and Dick want me to stay with you.”

“No, no, Smith; we will help you; but it looks so impossible, and it’s so horrible!” And Fred shuddered.

What Smith had proposed was this: That he should feign death and be placed with the dead. He would then be carted out with them. The dead that were taken out at night were not buried until the next morning, and he might get a chance to slip away in the darkness.*

“But, Smith, you will perish from exposure or starvation, even if you succeed in getting away; you are so weak you can scarcely walk.”

“Better die in the woods alone than rot heah,” exclaimed the old man with vehemence.

“I think you are right, Smith, and we will help you all we can. Dick and I have made up our minds to escape, or die in the attempt.”

“Yo’ can’t cum my trick,” replied Smith, with something of his old humor; “yo’ air too fat.”

*This method of escape became so common at Libby prison, that a guard was placed over the dead.

The next evening Fred and Darling bore the apparently lifeless body of the old scout and placed him in the long row of the dead. Not one in that line of emaciated clods of humanity looked more like a corpse than John Smith. His long gray hair and beard lay tangled around his face and on his breast. The vermin swarmed over him, as they did over the corpses by his side, and he lay as still as these inanimate clods of clay.

At last the heavy wagon was driven in, and with oaths and jests the Confederates commenced cording the dead on the wagon like so many sticks of wood.

Fred and Darling stood a little way off, watching the men at their ghastly task and fairly holding their breath in suspense. At last Smith was reached, and his body was carelessly thrown on with the rest.

“Thank God!” whispered Fred, “he is on top of the load; he cannot be smothered.”

At last all were on, and the lumbering wagon was driven away with its grewsome freight. The gates opened, then closed, and Fred and Darling gave a long sigh of relief.

“He is at least outside of the stockade,” said Darling.

“Yes,” answered Fred; “but the worst is to come. We can only hope and pray that he may be successful.”

The next morning when the dead were buried, a soldier said to Wry Neck Smith, “It ’pears to

me that thar air one less dead Yank heah than thar war last night."

"Must have been a resurrection, then," laughed Smith. "Are you sure you counted right?"

"No; what do it matter, anyway, about one mo' or less dead Yank?"

"Not much," answered Smith. "We will get them all, anyway, sooner or later; so let us bury what we have; there are over a hundred of them."

So there was no report made that one of the corpses had mysteriously disappeared.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ESCAPE.

ALL the next day, every time the gate opened or there was any unusual excitement, Fred and Darling trembled lest they might see Smith brought back, torn and mangled by the dogs. But as the day wore away and they heard nothing, they began to hope that his ruse had been successful, and that he had escaped.

“But he was so weak,” said Fred, as he was discussing the probabilities of his escape with Darling, “the dogs may have dragged him down and killed him.”

“Or,” remarked Darling, “he may have died from exposure or exhaustion. It must have been fearful, his lying among those dead men for hours—enough to tax the nerves of a man in vigorous health. Not one in all that row looked more like a corpse than he. It is no wonder the rebs were deceived.”

“If it had not been for his great vitality and indomitable will, he would have been dead long before this,” replied Fred. “I hardly see, even if he is not detected, how he can have survived during the night, and it will be a blessing if he has not.

Just think of him wandering through the woods nearly naked and without food''; and Fred shuddered.

During the day Captain Wirz accompanied by a Confederate officer entered the stockade. The purpose of the officer was to try to obtain recruits for the Confederate army. The officer made a speech to the prisoners, telling them that the South was sure to be victorious; that Grant would soon be in headlong flight for Washington, and Sherman for Chattanooga.

“Your government,” he exclaimed, “even if it wished, can do nothing for you; but it does not wish; it cares nothing for you. It is indifferent whether you live or die. You blame us for your suffering here; it is your own government that is to blame. You can starve, for all the Yankee government cares. There has not been a day or an hour but the South has been willing to exchange prisoners, but your government absolutely refuses. Why should you be faithful to a government that cares nothing for you. Abe Lincoln is a monster [groans and cries of ‘Hurrah for old Abe!’ from the prisoners]; you can all starve and he will laugh.” [Cries of “Who is starving us?”]

“The Confederacy,” continued the officer, “is doing the very best for you it can. [Cries of ‘That’s a lie!’] To show you that you are mistaken, and that the Confederacy is kind and wants to help you, I make you this most generous offer. All of you who will enlist in the Confederate army

will be well cared for and paid. [‘In Confederate shinplasters!’ cried the prisoners, derisively.] In money that will be as good as gold, as soon as the South has secured her independence.”

The officer stopped a moment to notice the effect of his words, and then went on: “If you enlist, none of you will be sent to the front, but you will be placed to guard inland towns and preserve order throughout the country. The Confederacy makes you this most generous offer. All of you that will accept it, step to the front. Remember, none of you will be called upon to fight against your late comrades.”

Fred looked with anxious eyes on the gathered thousands. All the misery, the suffering, the horribleness of the pen was before him. There the prisoners stood, nearly naked, starving, dying by inches. Would not some of them accept the terms offered? Not a man moved. The officer grew very red in the face.

Then one of the prisoners spoke up: “Colonel, we can starve, we can rot, we can die, but we never can prove unfaithful to the old flag.”

Suddenly a voice struck up:

“We are coming, Father Abraham,
Three hundred thousand more,
Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.”

Ten thousand voices took up the refrain, and the great waves of sound arose, and then swelled and broke like the billows of the ocean.

“‘Tam Fader Abraham!’” shouted Wirz, stamp-

ing the ground in his fury; "I starve you so you can't sing. Rot, you tam fools, you!" And amid the shouts, groans, and execrations of the prisoners the party sought the refuge of the gates, and as they disappeared the voices of the prisoners arose in one grand, triumphant chorus:

"My Country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of Liberty."

Never had Fred heard "America" sung with such pathos, such love of country expressed in every note.

The great volume of sound died away amid the tops of the whispering pines which surrounded the stockade, and a solemn hush came over the prison.

Then one of the prisoners, who had smuggled a flag into the prison by wrapping it around his body beneath his clothes, pulled aside his ragged shirt and showed his treasure. Hundreds crowded around him and touched the flag lovingly with their fingers. To them it was holy.

"Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?"

sang a voice.

Once more the prisoners took up the words, and ten thousand voices sang the praises of the old flag. As the last note died away, cheer after cheer rent the air.

Outside, Wirz was raging like a wild beast. He gave a command, the bugles blew, and the Confed-

erate soldiers rushed to the stockade and took their station on the embankment surrounding it. Then a cannon roared, and a shell went shrieking over the prison, and burst in the woods beyond.

The prisoners stood as if petrified. They expected that the stockade would be swept with a storm of shell and canister, as Wirz had so often threatened; but he gratified his little soul by thoroughly frightening the prisoners.

When the camp had been restored to its usual quiet, Fred said to Darling: "Dick, never have I seen, never have I known what patriotism is until now. Talk of charging to the flaming mouth of the cannon! What is that, when it is done in the fierce excitement of battle, to these starving wretches refusing food and life? Dying by inches, suffering the tortures of the damned, yet with their expiring breath they sing songs of praise to the old flag, and their last thought is of their country."

"In years to come," replied Darling, in a broken voice, "the story of Andersonville will not only thrill America, but the whole world, with horror. But amid the horror there will stand forth the brightest page of patriotism, of fidelity, of devotion to principle, the world has ever seen. To die in battle is grand; to die in Andersonville is sublime."

Both were silent for a time, and then Darling said, "Captain, must we be among those who die here?"

"Never, never!" answered Fred, with terrible

emphasis; "at least not by slow torture. If die we must, let it be in an attempt to escape."

"Amen!" responded Darling.

"I did think," continued Fred, "that we might get detailed in one of the squads which go out for wood, and then make a break for liberty. But I learn that every one who goes out for wood must give his parole not to try to escape, and I do not feel like breaking my parole of honor. Moreover, to break away from the guards while after wood would bring instant pursuit. Is there not some way we can scale the stockade?"

"It is twenty feet high," replied Darling, in a despairing voice, as he glanced at the wooden walls that shut them in, "and unfortunately we have not wings."

"Let us walk around the stockade," said Fred, "as close to the dead line as we can without attracting attention, and see what we can discover."

"Agreed," answered Darling; and they slowly began the weary round.

Short as had been their imprisonment, it had already begun to tell on them. Then the misery they saw around them had a stupefying effect; it was almost like receiving a blow on the head. It is said that many soldiers who entered Andersonville were so shocked at the horrors they saw that they never rallied, but pined away and died as if smitten by a deadly plague.

On the east side of the stockade, near where the creek flowed out, Fred noticed that at the top of

the stockade two of the logs did not fit tightly together, leaving an opening some two inches wide and extending downward some two feet. Fred gave Darling's arm a convulsive grasp.

"See, Dick," he whispered; "see those two logs which do not quite join at the top."

"Yes," replied Darling, "but what of it? What good can that little crack do us?"

"Don't you see," answered Fred, trembling in his excitement, "that a rope with a large knot on the end would hold in that crack, and enable us to reach the top?"

Darling started as if shot. "Captain," he exclaimed, "you are right." Then his countenance fell, and he continued in a despairing tone, "But where is our rope—and if we had one, could we catch it in that narrow opening? And what would the guards be doing while we were trying to fasten the rope?"

"We can only hope," calmly answered Fred; "let us not conjure up lions in our path until we meet them. This is the only plan that I have thought of that has even the slightest probability of success. Full of danger as it is, we must try it. As for a rope, we shall find some way of making one."

"Captain," answered Darling, "I am ashamed of my doubts. I am with you to the end. I believe you have solved the problem of escaping."

Full of their determination to escape, they at once began to lay their plans. It was fully agreed

that they would say nothing to any one. It was well known that the prison was full of spies, anxious to report any attempt to escape, for by so doing they would curry favor with Wirz, and be granted special privileges.

The next day Fred and Darling managed to get on the detail to go and gather wood. They had taken careful note of the place in the stockade where they would attempt to scale it, and they were anxious to note the lay of the country on the outside.

Fortunately, they gathered wood on that side of the stockade. Fred took careful note of the surroundings. He looked over the ground carefully, and then shut his eyes and tried to think just how it was. This he did again and again, until the scene was photographed, as it were, on his memory.

They were chopping close to the edge of the swamp that bordered the creek which flowed through the prison, when suddenly the ax with which Fred was chopping flew off the handle, falling close to the edge of the swamp.

One of the guards noticed it, and laughingly said: "Better fasten that ax on tighter, Yank, or you-uns will get your head busted."

Fred picked up the ax, and sticking it back on the handle, began to make a wedge to hold it on. Suddenly it flashed through his mind, "Here is a chance to get an ax, and it may stand us in good stead as a weapon, or be useful in digging."

If their plans to scale the stockade proved unsuc-

cessful, Fred and Darling had determined to try tunneling, and for this the ax would be invaluable.

Borrowing Darling's ax for the pretended purpose of driving in the wedge, Fred whispered: "Dick, I am going to have this ax come off again. Watch your chance, pick it up, and conceal it in your bosom. Leave the rest to me."

Darling nodded; but how Fred was to account for the loss of the ax he did not understand.

In a moment the ax came off again, and this time fell close to where Darling was, and the guard happened to be looking the other way. Darling snatched up the ax, and placed it in his bosom, and then chopped away very industriously. Fred picked up a stick, and commenced poking in the mud in the edge of the swamp.

"Here, Yank, what air you-uns doin' thar?" yelled the guard.

"That confounded ax has come off again, and flew here in the mud," answered Fred, continuing his poking.

The guard uttered an oath. "See heah, Yank, if you-uns hev lost that 'ere ax, I will catch thunder. I hev a mind to chuck you-uns in the mud after it."

"I am not to blame," meekly answered Fred, continuing his search.

The guard came to his aid, and the mud was thoroughly probed, but no ax was found.

"Must hev flew farther than you-uns think, Yank," remarked the guard.

"Perhaps it did, but I thought it struck right

here," and Fred designated the place by punching in the mud with his stick.

"No use, Yank," said the guard at length; "it is a goner. And see heah, thar is no use sayin' a word about losin' that 'ere ax. Old Wirz would make a bigger fuss than if I would kill a hundred of you fellers. I don't want him climbing on my neck. Stick the handle in the mud after the ax, and let old Wirz find out one is missin' if he can."

"All right," responded Fred; and suiting the action to his words, he thrust the handle in the mud out of sight.

"Now, blame you, keep mum, or I'll shoot yer head off," exclaimed the guard, threateningly.

"Mum is the word," answered Fred. "What in the world should I want to say anything for? It would only get me into trouble as well as you."

Taking up the wood, which the prisoners were obliged to pack on their backs, as Wirz refused to furnish teams to haul it, the choppers made their way back to the stockade.

Captain Wirz noticed Fred as he passed staggering under his load, and grinning, said: "How you like it? Wouldn't give your barole, eh? Tam fool."

Fred did not reply to the brute, but thought, "I may surprise you yet, old fellow, and not be as big a fool as you think."

That night Fred and Darling fitted a short handle in their ax, making it a weapon of no mean worth.

The next day they began a search for suitable

material for a rope. Both of them had managed to secrete a considerable sum of money when they were taken prisoners, and this now came into good play. By paying a fabulous price, they managed to secure two shelter tents, also a pocketknife. The canvas of which the shelter tents were made was strong and well suited for the purpose for which they intended it.

When night came, they tore the tents into strips, and these strips they twisted into a strong, serviceable rope. On one end of the rope a large knot was tied, and inside the knot a stone was secured, to give the rope sufficient weight to be thrown easily.

“There!” exclaimed Fred, when the job was finished; “if we can get the rope into that opening between the logs, it will hold, and the rest will be easy.”

“If we are not stopped by a bullet,” dryly remarked Darling.

They now only had to wait for a night suitable for their undertaking. Fred had carefully noted the place in the stockade, and he believed he could find it in the darkest night. Two days passed before a night came suitable for their purpose. In the meantime, they had succeeded in purchasing some corn bread of a guard, which they concealed to take with them.

The second night came, and with it a terrific storm. The heavy rain extinguished the fires and left the whole camp in darkness. The little creek

that ran through the ground became a rushing torrent. The prisoners, chilled and benumbed with the drenching rain, lay in their wretched shelters, or curled up in the holes they had dug in the ground.

At first there was lightning, and it was useless to try to make their escape when, at any moment, a blaze of light might reveal what they were doing. At last the lightning ceased to play and the thunder died away in the distance, but the sky still continued to be overcast with dark clouds, and a drizzling rain fell.

When Fred and Darling saw what kind of a night it was, they hastily made their preparations for their escape. So careful had they been that their nearest comrades had no idea of their intention. Fred had the rope wound round his body under his shirt. Darling carried the ax, wrapped in a piece of cloth, next to his body. All the provisions they had was corn bread, which they carried in their pockets.

Just as darkness was falling, they made their way near to the place in the stockade. They were roughly accosted two or three times, and asked what they were doing away from their detachments, but by moving a little they managed to escape any unpleasant questioning, and when darkness came and the storm broke in all its violence, they were left in peace.

They lay down as near the dead line as they dared, and waited for a favorable opportunity.

Wearily the hours passed. Would the lightning never cease? They were soaked to the skin, and shivered with the cold. It was one o'clock before the favorable opportunity came. Then cold and wet were forgotten. The excitement of the moment sent the blood flying through their veins.

"Now," whispered Fred.

Crawling like snakes, they were soon past the fatal dead line. A few feet more and they would be in the shelter of the palisades. They heard the cough of a guard, then his footsteps. The footsteps ceased; the guard had halted. Their hearts ceased to beat; had they been discovered?

No; the guard walked on again. A moment more, and they were by the side of the stockade. The guard could not see them now unless he stooped and peered over the timbers.

Crouching close to the ground, they listened intently. At length they heard the footsteps of the guard returning. He was muttering to himself and cursing the weather. Meeting the guard coming from the other way, Fred was delighted to hear one of them say:

"What's the use of we-uns pacing back and forth in this blasted weather. No Yank will be stirring in such a storm. We-uns might as well stay in our shelter."

"That's what I was thinkin'," replied the other guard; "let's get in the dry." And both of them sought the shelter of the little houses built for the use of the guards.

"Now is our time," whispered Fred. "Fortune so far is with us."

Unwinding the rope from his body, Fred lightly threw the knotted end over the stockade. He then gently pulled, and to his chagrin it fell back into his hands. He tried it again and again, but with no better results. Beads of perspiration started out on his forehead, a great fear took hold of his heart, the fear that he might be unable to make the rope hold.

"Are you sure you are in the right place?" whispered Darling; "try it a little more to the right."

Fred did so, but with no better result. Both now were thoroughly frightened. Were they to fail after all? Fred's hands began to shake so he could scarcely throw the rope.

"Here," whispered Darling, "let me try it to the left. In the dark we may have missed the place a little."

With a trembling hand Fred handed Darling the rope. Darling took it, gave a cast, and then commenced slowly to draw it in. It readily came for a few feet, and then stopped, and refused to come farther. He pulled hard, then threw his whole weight upon it, but it did not give.

"It holds! it holds!" Darling whispered joyfully in Fred's ear.

"God be praised!" answered Fred, his fear all gone. "Now, go—go quick!"

They had had a dispute the night before as to

which one should go first, but the dispute was peremptorily ended by Fred, who, as Darling's superior officer, ordered him to go first. So now, without a word, Darling commenced to climb, and by bracing his feet against the timbers easily reached the top.

As he was lost to view in the darkness, Fred held his breath in suspense. Would the rope hold? Would he meet a guard? A moment more, and the rope was drawn up a couple of feet, and dropped back. It was the signal from Darling that he was all right, and for Fred to come on. Fred had climbed but a few feet when he felt the rope violently jerked. It was a signal from Darling there was danger. At the same moment he heard the footsteps of a guard. Fred clinched his teeth and commenced to climb with all his strength. He would not retreat, he would not give up; liberty was too near. The slight noise that Fred made reached the ear of the guard.

"Ah! what is that?" he muttered; and stopping, he stooped down and peered over the stockade. The next moment he was seized by Darling and hurled headlong from the platform down the embankment.

"Here!" hoarsely whispered Darling, "give me your hand, quick"; and Fred felt himself drawn up, and the next moment he and Darling had sprung down the embankment and were fleeing away in the darkness.

In the meantime the guard had struggled to his

feet and was lustily calling for help. He had lost his gun in his fall, and therefore could not fire. The relief guards rushed to the place whence the calls for help came. In a few moments the whole camp was in an uproar. The soldiers swarmed to their stations, and the artillerymen stood with lanyard in hand, ready to sweep the prison with canister.

But there seemed to be no cause for alarm. The whole prison was wrapped in darkness, and there was no unusual noise. The prisoners who heard the confusion wondered what it meant, but concluded that Wirz was only trying to see how quickly his men could get into position if there was a night alarm.

As for the Confederates, it was some time before they found out the true cause of the alarm. The guard who made the outcry was brought into the presence of Wirz, and his story told. It was little he knew. He thought he heard a noise as if some one was trying to climb the stockade. He peered over to see if he could see anything, when he was suddenly seized by some unseen person, and hurled with prodigious force down the embankment. As he was struggling to his feet, he thought he heard footsteps fleeing away in the darkness, but was not sure.

A search was made, and the rope with which Fred and Darling had made their escape was found. How many had escaped was unknown.

Early the next morning the prisoners were

mustered, and it was found that full a hundred had died during the night. But there were two who were not found with the dead, neither did they answer to their names—Frank Hetrick and Ed Merchant.

“That tam Hetrick, who wouldn’t give his barole, gone!” cried Wirz.

“Yes, Captain,” replied Wry Neck Smith; “but there are only two of them. We will soon have them.”

“Send out twice the usual number of dogs and men,” snarled Wirz. “Tam them! They vill remember me ven I get hold of them”; and Wirz gratified his petty spite by ordering that no rations be issued to the prisoners for the day.

CHAPTER XIV.

TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS REWARD.

GENERAL WHEELER was preparing to make a raid on the railroads in Sherman's rear, and it was in connection with this raid that Major Kenyon had been called to Atlanta. Through the influence of General Hood he was excused from accompanying Wheeler's command, and was given permission to return to Macon and investigate the case of Private Frank Bailey.

Major Kenyon hunted up the officer who had charge of the prisoners from Athens to Madison. This officer stated that the escape of no prisoner had been reported to him at Athens. He well remembered this Bailey through the fact that his horse had thrown the major. He was sure that Bailey was with the prisoners when he took charge of them at Athens, and also that he was with them when he turned them over at Madison. Whether the name of Bailey was on the list or not, he did not know, as he did not examine it; but he was sure none had escaped on the march from Athens to Madison.

Major Kenyon's next movement was to hunt up the officer who had charge of the prisoners from Madison to Macon. This officer was perfectly sure

none of the prisoners escaped while under his charge. He did not remember the name of Bailey, but every prisoner answered to his name. The list of the prisoners was found and examined. The name of Bailey was not found, but that of Frank Hetrick was.

Major Kenyon was as much in the dark as ever. "I tell you, Captain Armstrong," he exclaimed, with a big oath, "there has been dirty work somewhere—work for which some one will suffer. I believe this Bailey and Hetrick are one and the same person."

"Who is he, anyway?" asked the captain. "What is the trouble?"

"Why—why," answered the major, stammering, "he is the young devil who made his horse throw me. But that—that is not the reason I am so anxious to get him. I have the best of reasons for thinking he is an officer sailing under false colors, as well as a notorious spy."

Captain Armstrong could not restrain a smile. The story of Major Kenyon's mishap had become well known, and was the source of much amusement among the officers. But the captain restrained his mirth, and answered respectfully: "Why, Major, I remember that young soldier; he was pointed out to me. A fine-looking young fellow, but of one thing I am certain, he did not go by the name of Bailey. Let's see, I think they told me his name was Hetrick—yes, I am sure of it, Hetrick was the name."

"Just as I thought," exclaimed Kenyon; "I am on the right track. Oh, he is a slick one, but I will catch him yet."

Major Kenyon now decided on a bold movement—that of interviewing Kate Shackelford. He wanted to be perfectly sure of his ground, and make no mistake. But he made a big mistake when he visited Kate. If he had known that young lady, he would have kept away from her.

When Major Kenyon's card was taken up to Kate, she started and turned pale as she read the name. She well knew that the major's visit was in some way connected with what she knew of Fred. Seeing her hesitate, the butler said: "Gem'an said you no 'quainted wid him, but he had business very 'portant."

Kate at once made up her mind that she would see him. "Tell the gentleman I shall be down in a moment," she said.

Major Kenyon was not quite prepared for the queenly girl that swept into the room and said coldly: "You wished to see me, sir?"

Her beauty greatly embarrassed him. He was an admirer of handsome women, and he thought he had never seen a more beautiful one. The excitement under which she labored had heightened her color and made her eyes shine like two stars. All that he could do was to gaze at her. He was called back to earth by her cold voice: "Why am I honored with your visit, Major Kenyon? I was told you wished to see me on important business."

For once Major Kenyon was abashed. He found it very hard to state his business. He colored and stammered like a schoolboy. It was very hard to say anything disagreeable to this cold, stately beauty. At length he managed to say:

“Miss Shackelford, it is only the love I bear my country and the great desire I have for the success of our cause that has led me to seek this interview. Pardon me, but I know you to be a true daughter of the South, and that you would do nothing to hurt our sacred cause—that is, knowingly.”

The major paused.

“Go on,” said Kate, in the same cold voice.

“A few days ago a Yankee prisoner was brought through here on his way to Andersonville. You sought an interview with him. He gave his name as Hetrick. Is that truly his name, and is he a private soldier as he represented? I do not ask you these questions to pry into private affairs, Miss Shackelford, but because it is my duty to do so.”

“I believe I told Captain Bainbridge who and what he was,” replied Kate, icily. “Is that all your business with me, sir?”

“But you surely know more,” exclaimed the major, nettled by her manner. “You must know his true name is not Hetrick?”

“Sir!” Kate’s tone caused the major to stop. She had arisen, her face was flaming, her eyes flashing. Striking a call-bell sharply, she waited until the butler made his appearance.

“Thomas, show this man the door at once”: and without another word she turned and swept from the room.

“Dis way, sah, dis way,” said Thomas, bowing and scraping, but with a broad grin on his face.

There was no help for it. Major Kenyon was ingloriously ejected, and the door shut upon him. His blood was at the boiling-point, but he could not demand satisfaction of a woman. Angry as he was, he could not help admiring Kate.

“Gods!” he muttered, “what a woman! Beautiful as a houri, but full of fire as a volcano. What a prize for a man to win! I could give up Lucille for her. How I should like to tame her proud spirit!”

The major’s next move was to see Captain Bainbridge. The captain, suspecting nothing, readily gave Major Kenyon all the information in his power, and ended by praising Miss Shackelford for showing so much kindness to a private soldier who had protected her from insult.

Major Kenyon’s lip curled in scorn. “Captain Bainbridge,” he exclaimed, “you have been most egregiously imposed upon. Miss Kate Shackelford pulled the wool over your eyes nicely.”

“What!” exclaimed Captain Bainbridge, turning very red.

“I say you have been imposed upon. That soldier’s name is not Hetrick. Miss Shackelford simply lied to you.”

“Stop!” thundered Bainbridge.

Major Kenyon looked at Captain Bainbridge in astonishment. "What's the matter?" he asked.

"Another word derogatory of Miss Shackelford, and you will answer to me as a gentleman."

Major Kenyon gave a prolonged whistle. "Look a-here, Bainbridge, I don't want to quarrel with you. In fact, I would save you. You are standing on dangerous ground. This Hetrick is really a Yankee captain and spy. Miss Shackelford's—"

"Stop!" again commanded Captain Bainbridge, with a white, drawn face. "I will not hear one word derogatory of her."

There had been a listener to the latter part of this conversation. Captain Calhoun Pennington had come into the office, and to his surprise heard the two officers discussing Kate Shackelford. So engaged were they that they did not notice the entrance of Captain Pennington.

"Pardon me, gentlemen," he exclaimed, blandly; "but if I mistake not, you are taking in vain the name of a young lady who is a relative of mine. I have the honor of being a cousin of Miss Kate Shackelford. I thank you," bowing to Captain Bainbridge, "for defending her good name; but if I find or hear of either of you discussing that young lady in public again, I shall hold you to a strict account. Here is my card"; and he handed each of them a card, which read:

CAPTAIN CALHOUN PENNINGTON,
Secret Service Department,
Army Tennessee, C. S. A.

Here was something neither officer was looking for. Major Kenyon was the first to recover from his surprise.

“Captain Pennington,” he said, “I have heard of you, and I know you to be a brave and true officer. Will you grant me a few minutes’ private conversation with you?”

“Willingly,” answered Calhoun; “though it may be no more than fair for Captain Bainbridge to be present, for I must confess I am in the dark as to what you two gentlemen were quarreling about. It was enough for me to know you were discussing the good name of a young lady in public, something that no gentleman should do.”

“I am more than willing Captain Bainbridge should be present,” responded Major Kenyon, “for I have no quarrel with him.”

The three officers retired to a private room. There Major Kenyon adroitly told his story, placing his desire to expose Fred solely on patriotic grounds.

Calhoun listened in amazement. This was the first intimation that he had received that Fred was a prisoner. He saw it all—how Kate was trying to shield and protect Fred. It was a delicate matter to handle.

“It seems to me,” he at length said, “that this matter comes directly under my authority as head of the secret service of this department. I will at once look into this case, and find out for a certainty who this Hetrick is. But one thing, gentlemen,

I want you to understand, I will not have the name of Miss Shackelford dragged into this matter. She has done nothing, unless it is to conceal the prisoner's true name. There has been no attempt made to have him escape, simply a request that he be given work on the parole list at Andersonville. It is well known that hundreds of the prisoners are so employed. If the prisoner is really Captain Frederic Shackelford, as Major Kenyon believes, I can easily find out. Major Kenyon can be congratulated on his zeal for the South; Captain Bainbridge on defending the fair name of a lady. Major, I will keep you posted as to the outcome."

But no sooner was Major Kenyon alone than a malignant scowl came over his handsome features. "Fool," he muttered, "to think that I did not see through his little game. Captain Pennington, I don't trust you any more than I do Miss Kate Shackelford. You think that you are all-powerful in this, but an order from General Hood will convince you I still have something to say. After all, I do not know but I would let Captain Shackelford go, if by it I thought I could win the smiles of Miss Kate Shackelford. But there is Lucille. It has been taken for granted I would marry her. But the minx has never said she would, and her letters lately have been strangely cold. It is over two years since I saw her. She was then not much over sixteen. They say she is beautiful—very beautiful. So is Miss Shackelford—and what a wife she would make for a man like me! She

looked like a tragedy queen when she told that smirking nigger to show me the door. Zounds! how I should like to tame her! I have it. I will get Captain Shackelford in my power, and then, if I choose, I will make terms with Miss Kate Shackelford. If I fail, there is Lucille; she will be none the wiser. But the first thing is to get hold of Captain Shackelford, and I must see that Pennington doesn't get ahead of me."

As for Calhoun, he lost no time in going to see Kate. He knew if he would save Fred he must act, and act at once. But how?

When Calhoun told Kate what had happened, she made a clean breast of the whole matter.

"But, Kate, why didn't you tell me before? I might have done something then."

"Because," she sobbed, "he made me promise not to say a word to any one. He was especially anxious that his father should not know. Oh, Calhoun! can't you save Fred? This horrid Major Kenyon will stop at nothing. How I hate him! Calhoun, you ought to have seen his face when I ordered Thomas to show him the door. He is a handsome man, but at that moment he looked like a demon."

"I am afraid, Kate, you did Fred no good, but I glory in your courage."

"But, Calhoun, what can we do?" persisted Kate.

Calhoun thought long and hard. At length he looked up with a brightening face.

“Kate,” he exclaimed, “I have it. Fred must die.”

“What!” ejaculated the girl, opening her eyes in astonishment. “Oh, Calhoun, what do you mean?”

“I mean this soldier known as Hetrick must die as far as the rolls of the prison show. Listen, Kate. Between one hundred and two hundred soldiers die at Andersonville every day. I believe I can arrange it so Fred can be reported dead, and he can take the place of a soldier who has really died. Let Hetrick be reported as dead and buried before Major Kenyon gets there, and we have him beaten.”

Kate clapped her hands. “Capital! capital!” she cried. “Calhoun, you are a genius.”

“Kate,” suddenly asked Calhoun, “is there anything between you and Captain Bainbridge?”

“No; why do you ask?”

“Because I found him and Major Kenyon about to fight a duel over you. It seems that the major spoke of you in somewhat uncomplimentary terms, and Captain Bainbridge resented it vigorously. But I put a stop to it. I told them that if I ever heard of either of them discussing your actions in public, they would have me to settle with.”

“Major Kenyon talking about me? What did he say?” asked Kate, with a dangerous gleam in her eye.

“Oh, he accused you of trying to shield a Yankee spy.”

“And Captain Bainbridge defended me?”

“Ready to fight for you, Kate. I am afraid you have wrought mischief there.”

Kate flushed. “Calhoun, if I have, I am not to blame. Captain Bainbridge has called on me three or four times. He is very nice, and good company. But men are such fools. You can’t smile on one but he falls head over heels in love with you—or pretends to.”

“I can hardly blame them in your case, cousin mine,” laughed Calhoun. “There! there!” he continued, as he saw a look of pain come into Kate’s face. “I know that old and terrible wound is not yet healed. Garrard’s grave is still more precious than any living lover.”

But Kate said nothing. Was it? She durst not ask herself the question.

“Kate,” continued Calhoun, “I have been ordered to East Tennessee to join Wheeler, so what I do for Fred must be done at once. I shall go to Andersonville this afternoon.”

“And father goes to the front to-morrow,” sobbed Kate. “Oh, how can I see him go back?”

“Be brave, Kate, be brave. Remember, you are a soldier’s daughter.”

“I will; but will this dreadful war never end? I begin to despair.”

“What, you, Kate—you? I never thought that.”

“Neither may you,” she cried. “I am ashamed of myself. Oh, if I were only a man, so I could fight!”

“Well, good-bye, Kate; I will see you when I get back from Andersonville. Keep up a brave heart.”

That evening Kate Shackelford had a caller in the person of Captain Bainbridge. Remembering what Calhoun said, she received him a little coldly. But what girl is there, only twenty, who objects to being admired. Kate was ill at ease. She had, in a measure, deceived Captain Bainbridge, and believing in her, he had nearly become involved in a quarrel. She clearly owed him an apology.

“Captain Bainbridge,” she began, “my cousin has told me how gallantly you defended me from the charge of Major Kenyon. You do not know how grateful I am; and yet, Captain, I—I am not worthy of your regards. Major Kenyon told the truth; I deceived you. I know you will despise me, but I—I am not sorry.”

“Tell me all about it,” replied Captain Bainbridge, in an unsteady voice. “You may trust me; I will not betray your confidence.”

Then Kate told him all about Fred; how he had procured a pardon for her when immured in a Northern prison as a spy, and how kind he had always been to her and all of his friends and relatives who were Confederates. She closed by saying:

“I know you will despise me for my deception, but I could not do otherwise than I have done.”

“Despise you!” he cried; “Miss Shackelford, instead of despising you, I honor you for what you have done. Your actions show the goodness of

your heart. Miss Shackelford—Kate, may I not call you Kate?—do you not see that I love you? You are more to me than life. Can you not, will you not, give me a little hope?"

Kate trembled. She saw that a true man loved her, a man to whom she had never given any encouragement. Her distress was so evident that he cried, "Miss Shackelford, forgive me if I have offended you."

"You have not offended me," she replied, in a low voice. "Any woman is honored by the love of a true man, and such a man I believe you to be; but I am so sorry—sorry for you, for I cannot love you; sorry for myself, for I have no love to give. My heart lies in a grave where sleeps the most gallant of Southern soldiers."

"Then you love no one else?" he asked, eagerly.

"I—love—no—one—else," she responded, hesitatingly; but as she said it, she grew very pale, for all unbidden a vision of a boyish, laughing face arose before her, and the face was that of Captain Hugh Raymond.

"You are not well; you look ill," said Captain Bainbridge, tenderly, noticing her extreme paleness. "Shall I not ring?"

"No, no; I shall be better in a moment. Captain, hear a further confession I thought never to make to mortal ears; but I owe it to you, to your kindness. There is another man whom I would love, but he is an enemy to my country, and I would die before I would wed a foe of the South.

So I have torn that love from my heart. Captain Bainbridge, I wish I had never seen that unworthy object of my love. If I had not, I might learn to love you. But as it is, there is no hope. Forgive me"; and she turned and almost fled from the room.

As Captain Bainbridge left the house he reeled almost like a drunken man. He sought and gained permission to join his regiment at the front. A few days afterwards he fell, bravely cheering on his men in that desperate charge at Jonesboro.

When Kate gained her room after she had left Captain Bainbridge, she burst into a whirlwind of passion. "I don't love—I won't love him!" she cried, stamping her little foot. "I hate you, Hugh Raymond, you miserable Yankee!" And with this outbreak, she threw herself on the bed, and had a good cry. The cry over, she arose and bathed her eyes, and comforted herself with the thought that she hated the very ground on which Hugh Raymond walked.

Calhoun Pennington, after his interview with Kate, made preparations to go to Andersonville by the first train. Captain Pennington was not only at the head of the secret service of the Department of the Tennessee, but he himself was a daring spy. The hope of the Confederates was to break the communications of General Sherman so thoroughly as to force him to retreat. Calhoun, disguised as a country boy, spent two weeks in middle Tennessee, finding out the strength of the different garrisons

guarding the railroads, the best routes for a raiding party to take, and where the heaviest and most effective blows could be struck. Wheeler had made a very successful raid on Sherman's rear, striking the railroad in several places, and capturing Dalton, and then making his way into East Tennessee. Here he recruited his command, preparatory to making a dash across the mountains and striking the railroads between Nashville and Chattanooga. Calhoun was to act as guide to this raid of Wheeler, and was under orders to join him as soon as possible. Thus whatever he did for Fred, he must do at once.

To his chagrin he found Major Kenyon on the same train that he took for Andersonville. Calhoun saw that his plan of having Fred personate a dead prisoner could not now be carried out.

"Ah!" said the major, blandly, but with a cynical smile, as he saw Calhoun, "glad to see you, Captain. Going down to Andersonville to probe that Hetrick matter, are you? Well, you scratch Hetrick's skin, and you will find Captain Fred Shackelford beneath. As I had a little leisure, I thought I would run down and see how you came out."

Calhoun could hardly resist the temptation of striking the scoundrel in the face, but controlling his temper, he said: "It is a little strange that any Confederate officer should have leisure time just now, as the fate of Atlanta is trembling in the balance."

“What is Captain Pennington doing so far in the rear at this critical period?” asked Major Kenyon, with a sneer.

“My duty,” calmly replied Calhoun.

“Are you so sure of that?” replied the major; and putting his hand in his pocket, he drew forth a paper, and handing it to Calhoun, said, “Please read that.”

It was an order from General Hood saying that as Captain Calhoun Pennington, chief of the secret service, was under orders to join General Wheeler in East Tennessee, the matter of looking into the case of Private Hetrick, supposed to be the Yankee officer, Captain Frederic Shackelford, was given to Major Kenyon, who would have entire control of the case.”

“Why didn’t you show this to me before I started on this journey?” fiercely demanded Calhoun.

“Because I only received this order to-day, and also for the better reason that I want to be sure of the identification. As you are a cousin of this precious Captain Shackelford, of course you will have no trouble in identifying him.”

Calhoun saw that he was trapped. He could only mentally curse Major Kenyon, and resolve to get even with him in time.

“You have gone to a great deal of trouble, Major; but as you seem to have this entire matter in your hands, and you were not gentleman enough to tell me this before I started, you may do your

own identifying. I shall take the first train back, and start at once for East Tennessee, obeying General Hood's command."

Thus saying, Calhoun lit a cigar, unfolded a newspaper, and calmly commenced reading, paying no further notice to Kenyon. When Andersonville was reached, Calhoun inquired when he could get a train back, and then sauntered up to Wirz's headquarters. Major Kenyon had preceded him, and had found Captain Wirz in a most towering passion, and swearing volubly in German. As soon as Major Kenyon could get his ear, he stated his business.

"Vat?" exclaimed Wirz; "is it that tam Hetrick you vant once more?"

"Yes," replied Kenyon.

"You vant that tam Hetrick, do you?" sputtered Wirz, bobbing up and down like a jumping-jack; "vell, he has escaped."

"Escaped?" ejaculated Calhoun, in amazement.

"Escaped?" yelled Major Kenyon, with an oath. "When? How?"

The story of Fred's and Darling's escape was told, and Wirz added that a company of cavalry with a pack of bloodhounds was already in pursuit.

"Ve vill catch them, ve vill catch them," said Wirz, still bobbing up and down; "ve always do; and ven I have them—"

"What will you do?" broke in Calhoun.

"I stamp them, I starve them, I tie them up by the thumbs, I learn them to run away"; and Wirz's face took on a most fiendish expression.

“I will do better than that,” exclaimed Major Kenyon, with a meaning look at Calhoun; “I will hang them; and, Captain Wirz, it is as much as your position is worth if these men be not captured.”

Wirz was thoroughly frightened, but before he could answer, a cavalryman dashed up, his horse covered with foam, and said: Captain Wirz, Lieutenant Stevens, in command of the party sent in pursuit of the escaped prisoners, bade me tell you that in some manner the prisoners had procured arms, and have killed or disabled every dog in the pack. They are now in a swamp, where it is impossible to follow them with horses. He wants another pack of dogs, and also enough men to patrol the shores of the swamp thoroughly.”

The fury of Wirz when he heard the report knew no bounds. He raved like a madman, and swore that when captured the prisoners would be subjected to all manner of torture.

“Major,” said Calhoun, “as it is nearly train time, I will bid you good day. I wish you joy in catching your birds”; and with a mocking smile, he turned away.

On his return to Macon, he hastily sought Kate, and told her what had happened. He advised her to write at once to General Shackelford and give him the full particulars.

“Oh! what will become of Fred now?” exclaimed Kate, wringing her hands.

“I don’t know, but I do know one thing, he will never be taken alive. He will either escape or die

in the attempt. I wonder how they managed to kill the dogs."

"They? Is there some one with him?"

"Yes, and evidently one as brave and daring as himself. Let us hope for the best, Kate. But I must say good-bye, and away to East Tennessee."

It can be added that Captain Pennington guided General Wheeler across the mountains into middle Tennessee, and so well posted was Calhoun on where to strike that Wheeler inflicted terrible damage on the railroads, and escaped unharmed. It was one of the most successful raids that Wheeler ever made, and he gave Captain Pennington full credit for the prominent part he acted.

Yet it was this very raid that was one of the chief causes of the downfall of the Confederacy. It showed General Sherman how insecure his communications were, and fully decided him to make that remarkable march "from Atlanta to the sea."

No sooner had Calhoun left Major Kenyon with that mocking smile than the major burst into almost as great a rage as Captain Wirz.

"Captain Wirz," he exclaimed, "these men must be caught if it takes half the State of Georgia. Send every soldier you can possibly spare in pursuit. I will telegraph to Governor Brown, and have the State guards to the east and south on the watch. Send for more dogs. Leave no stone unturned."

Captain Wirz mustered every soldier he could possibly spare to send to Lieutenant Stevens to aid him in his search.

Before they started, Major Kenyon made them a short speech. "Soldiers," he said, "it is very important that these escaped prisoners be captured. No doubt the Confederate government will richly reward those who capture them. But to stimulate you, on my own account I will offer a reward of ten thousand dollars to the one or ones who will bring in the fugitives, dead or alive."

With a wild cheer, and with cries of "We will get them!" the soldiers dashed away. The trampling of their horses' feet and the deep baying of the hounds were soon lost in the distance. Major Kenyon took the next train back to Macon, but it was only to perfect his plans for the capture of the fugitives.

CHAPTER XV.

A FIGHT WITH THE BLOODHOUNDS.

AS Fred and Darling fled through the darkness, the cries of the guard for help followed them. After running a short distance, they stopped and listened. Their breath came in quick gasps, and they panted like men under some great exertion. The tumult and uproar of the camp were borne to their ears, and they could hear the excited voices of the officers as they shouted to their comrades, and then came the sound of the trampling of many feet.

“Quick, this way!” whispered Fred; “but don’t hurry; too much haste may be our undoing.” So they walked leisurely in the direction Fred indicated. They had gone but a short distance when they heard voices and the hurried trampling of soldiers in their front.

“Face about,” whispered Fred; “let’s pretend to be making for the stockade. It’s the only way to avoid suspicion.”

They did so, and in a moment a company of Confederate infantry rushed past them. As they commingled, Fred and Darling pretended to be in a great hurry to get to the stockade, but soon man-

aged to be left behind. In the darkness their uniforms were not noticed, neither was the fact that they had no guns. Well did the darkness serve them. The Confederates were in too great a hurry to get to the stockade to help quell the supposed outbreak to notice stragglers. As soon as they were left alone, Fred said: "Now is our time; the coast must be clear." So they turned their faces once more from the stockade.

So well had Fred studied the ground while out after wood that he had no trouble in taking the direction that he wished.

In the meantime the uproar in the Confederate camp increased. The beating of the drums, the hoarse commands of the officers, the hurried tramp of the soldiers as they rushed to the stockade—all these sounds were borne to their ears.

"Just hear them!" chuckled Darling; "we have succeeded in giving them a good scare, if nothing more."

"Sure," answered Fred; "but it will not be long before they will discover the rope, and the guard will tell the rest. In the morning the bloodhounds will be on our track. Remember our compact, Dick, never to be taken alive."

"Not much danger of my forgetting that, Captain; with us it is liberty or death."

The night was so dark that, do the best they could, they could only make slow progress. They found out that hurrying only wearied them, and they ran risk of severe injury by falling over logs or

running against trees. The break of day found them not over three miles from the stockade. As soon as it was light enough to see, Fred noticed that the creek which ran through the stockade flowed a little to their right.

“Let us take to the water,” said Fred; “it will throw the dogs off the scent, for at least a while.”

They waded down the creek for some distance, at length coming to a place where the branches of a tree overhung the water.

“Here is the place to leave the creek,” said Fred, as he swung himself up into the tree.

Darling followed, and by passing from tree to tree, they were enabled to go some fifty yards before they were obliged to come to the ground.

“This ought to throw the dogs off of the scent for some time,” remarked Fred, “and every minute gained is precious.”

“Aye,” answered Darling; “but the brutes will be on our trail soon enough to suit us, of that we can rest assured.”

“Then,” said Fred, “let us hurry. I want to place as many miles between us and Andersonville by night as possible.”

They had the advantage of other prisoners who had escaped in that they were in full health and their strength had not been reduced by starvation. Darling's wound had not yet entirely healed; he had anticipated little trouble from it, but he found that climbing the stockade had strained it, and it began to pain him severely.

They were also fortunate in having an ax for a weapon, which proved of the greatest service to them. The first thing they did after leaving the creek was to stop and fit the short handle which Darling had carried into the ax. They then cut a stout club, some two feet long, with which Fred armed himself. Being thus armed, they set out at a rapid rate, munching the corn bread they had with them as they traveled.

They had been on the way about two hours, and must have covered at least eight miles, when Fred suddenly halted and exclaimed, "Hark!"

The baying of dogs sounded faintly in the far distance. The two fugitives looked into each other's faces, and for a moment did not speak. Too well they knew the meaning of that sound. In speaking of it afterwards, Fred said that the distant baying of those bloodhounds was to him the most terrifying sound he ever heard; that it sent a sensation of fear through him that he never experienced amid the fire and smoke of the fiercest battle.

Darling spoke first. "The brutes are on our tracks," he exclaimed through his set teeth; "it will now be impossible for us to throw them off."

"It will not only be the dogs, but the soldiers with them, that we shall have to deal with. Once in the range of their guns, it will be all over with us. We must find a better place than this to fight. Come."

They both darted away like frightened deer, yet

in their hearts they knew that sooner or later the dogs would be on them. They had run but a short distance when Fred noticed a swamp to their right. "The swamp! the swamp!" he cried; "the dogs may follow us, but the men on horseback cannot. We shall have only the dogs to fight."

Without a moment's hesitation, they plunged into the swamp, thinking not of what was before them. They had taken but a few steps before they sank into the black and oozy mud up to their waists. Struggling out, they saw that they would have to be more careful of their footsteps. Black, putrid mud was everywhere, holding in its foul embrace pools of slimy, filthy water.

On every side the gnarled roots of trees reared their fantastic forms above the mud and water. Many of these roots looked like skeletons, with their long, bony arms outstretched, from which moss hung like shreds of flesh. Others took the form of hobgoblins and demons that seemed to be forever reaching for their victims.

In many places it was only by jumping from one of these roots to another that progress could be made. The somber Spanish moss hung trailing down from the branches of the trees, and at times would enfold them like a wet and moldy shroud.

Venomous reptiles, startled from their repose, would rear their horrid flattened heads, and hissing would coil for the deadly spring. Once Fred sprang on what he thought was a log, but it sank beneath him, and commenced to move away. He

gave a startled cry, and Darling, reaching forth, caught him by the hand, and drew him onto a hummock on which he stood. On glancing back, Fred saw the wicked eyes of a huge alligator looking into his own. Shuddering, he turned away.

At length they came to a small island—an oasis in this foul-smelling swamp of putrid mud and slimy water, of poisonous reptiles and loathsome alligators. They stopped and listened. The baying of the bloodhounds was not only heard, but sounded much nearer. The dogs had followed them into the swamp.

“We must stop here,” gasped Darling; “we have not succeeded in throwing the dogs, and we must fight them. I am completely exhausted, to say nothing of being unnerved by the horrors through which we have passed.”

“It was horrible,” answered Fred; “and we must get our breath before the dogs are on us. I am thankful we have only the dogs to deal with. Let us look for a suitable place in which to meet them, as in battle a good position may mean everything.”

They soon found a place that suited them, a large tree, two of whose roots came up from the ground, forming a defense on either side.

“Just the place!” cried Fred, joyfully.

Between the roots Fred and Darling took their stand. The dogs would have to attack them from the front. Darling, being the larger and stronger of the two, kept the ax. The club which Fred had

was left heavy at one end, the other end being hewn down small enough to be handily grasped. It made a weapon that in the hands of a strong man could be used with fearful effect. Fred took off his coat and wound it tightly around his left hand and forearm, and bade Darling do the same.

“If they have to chew anything,” exclaimed Fred, “it is much better to have them chew our coats than our hands or arms.”

Nearer and nearer sounded the baying of the hounds. Soon their sharp, angry cries showed that they had sighted their prey.

“There they come!” exclaimed Fred.

The dogs emerged from the swamp, trailing after them the filthy slime with which they were covered. Their red tongues were lolling out, and from their open mouths there dripped flecks of foam streaked with blood.

On they came, a dozen of them—huge, savage brutes, trained to tear and to kill. No wonder that for a moment a tremor, a thrill of fear, ran through the nerves of both Fred and Darling; then their muscles stiffened, they gripped their weapons with a grasp of steel, and awaited the onset.

Swift as the swoop of a hawk came the attack. The two leading brutes sprang at the throats of their victims. The one that attacked Darling fell with his skull cleft in twain. At the same time, Fred’s club fell with tremendous force on the head of the one which attacked him, crushing it like an eggshell.



SWIFT AS THE SWOOP OF A HAWK CAME THE ATTACK.

Neither Fred nor Darling could ever exactly tell what happened after that. The whole pack was at them, trying to reach and tear them down. One caught Fred by the hand around which he had wound his coat, and nearly dragged him from his place.

The battle was short and fierce. In three minutes it was all over. Half of the dogs lay dead. Three were trying to drag themselves away, disemboweled. The others were limping away, badly hurt, howling with pain.

Fred and Darling turned and looked at each other inquiringly. The question which trembled on the lips of each, but which each feared to ask, was, "Are you hurt?"

Their clothes were hanging in tatters around them, they were bleeding from a few slight wounds, but the precautions they had taken of protecting their left hands and arms had saved them from serious injury. Devoutly did they thank God for their escape, and they grasped each other by the hand with full hearts.

Their first work was to wash away as much as possible the stains and marks of the conflict. Then came the question what to do next.

"One thing is sure," said Fred, "we cannot stay here; we should starve. Then they will be on us as soon as they find out we have disposed of the dogs. By to-morrow the woods around this swamp will be swarming with soldiers. We must make our way out of it, and that as soon as possible.

What troubles me is that we do not know how large the swamp is. We cannot go out the way we came in; we should run right into the arms of our pursuers."

Darling groaned. "God, Captain, how I dread the swamp! It is worse than fighting."

"Cheer up, Dick, old boy; fortune has favored us so far; it may continue to do so."

"I know, Captain; but now the excitement of the fight is over, I feel as if we may lay our bones in this dreadful swamp."

"Dick, what in the world is the matter with you? Come on, or your fears will prove true."

Crossing the little island, they once more entered the swamp, but this time with more cautious footsteps. Now that they were not chased by the dogs, the full terrors of the swamp were fully realized. For two hours they struggled forward. In some places they had to make their way by passing from the branches of one tree to another. At last even the lion-hearted Darling began to despair.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "are we to perish here in this foul swamp?"

"Better rot here than in Andersonville," replied Fred.

"I would not rot in either place; it's a dog's death. I would die—die fighting. Why didn't we stay and meet the soldiers, and die like men?"

"Come, come, Dick, this is not like you; let us make one more effort."

Again they pressed forward, but their progress

was very slow. Darling's wounded arm began to look inflamed, and pained him severely. At length, after passing over a more difficult place than usual, Darling sat down, completely exhausted. For once the brave fellow's courage failed. The horrors of their situation had completely unnerved him. He could fight men or beasts, but the thought of dying and rotting in this foul swamp was enough to strike terror into the heart of the bravest.

"It's no use, Captain," he exclaimed, in a despairing voice; "it's no use trying any more. We have taken our last scout together. Look there!" and he pointed shuddering to a spot a few feet from them where a large moccasin lay coiled up, his beady eyes fixed on them, emitting a baneful light.

For answer Fred hurled his club at the moccasin, hitting it fairly on the head. For a moment it writhed and squirmed, and then rolled off the root on which it was lying, and disappeared in the slimy water.

"Cheer up, Dick," Fred answered, encouragingly; "you see that moccasin is disposed of, and if I mistake not, through that opening there I see the tops of pine-trees waving. If so, we are nearly out of the swamp."

Thus encouraged, Darling struggled to his feet, and they were soon rewarded by the sight of solid ground and a waving pine forest. To them it was like a sight of paradise.

"See! see!" cried Fred. "Dick, we are saved—saved." A few moments afterwards their feet

were pressing the solid earth; but their rejoicing was short, for the swamp stretched away on either side of them.

“Captain,” said Darling, “we have only reached another island, but we can at least die on solid land. Never will I try that awful swamp again. I can die without a murmur under these whispering pines.”

“Dick, it may not be an island; we can go until we find out.”

With a sigh Darling took up the line of march; but as they advanced the swamp receded, and they at last realized that they were on a point of land which extended far into the swamp.

“Dick,” cried Fred, joyfully, “the Lord is with us! If we had missed this point, we surely must have perished in the swamp. As it is, we are saved—saved!”

Darling turned to Fred with glistening eyes. “Captain,” he said, brokenly, “forgive me. I played the craven. But for you we must have perished in the swamp. I am ashamed of myself. I can never look you in the face again.”

“None of that, Dick; you don’t know how near I was to giving up myself. Never speak that way of yourself again. But I am awful hungry; how are you?”

“Hungry, too. But what little corn bread I have is soaked through with the foul swamp water.”

“Bad as it is, we must try to eat enough to keep up our strength. We must not be found in this vicinity by morning.”

They found it hard work to eat the bread, but managed to force down a few mouthfuls. Then taking a long draught from a bubbling spring, they started, going south, hoping in this manner to avoid meeting any of their pursuers who might be coming around the swamp. The woods were open, and the night being clear, they made rapid progress. Cheered by the hope of escape, they did not feel fatigue. After traveling about ten miles south, they turned east, their object being to reach the Flint River.

Toward morning they came to a country which was sparsely settled, and they were compelled to move with more caution. They also began to feel the gnawings of hunger. It soon became evident to them they would have to procure food, or their strength would fail. As they were skirting around a small plantation, they heard the squealing of hogs.

"Hist!" said Darling; "there is food. Stay here until I investigate."

Taking his ax in his hand, he cautiously crept in the direction from which the sound seemed to come. He soon came to where a number of hogs were nesting. A well-directed blow on the head killed a shoat weighing about seventy-five pounds. Darling brought back his prize in triumph.

"Here," he exclaimed, "is food; "but," he continued, ruefully, "we have no fire, and hungry as I am I cannot yet eat raw pork."

Neither of them had matches, and the outlook for a feast was indeed dubious.

“We will take the pig along,” said Fred; “we have been very fortunate so far, and our good fortune may continue. Who knows but that we may come across some fire.”

“Captain, you would put courage in a wooden man,” answered Darling, as he picked up the pig and threw it over his shoulder. “I already imagine myself eating broiled pork.”

They had not proceeded far on their way, and were making a detour around some negro cabins, when Fred stopped and said: “I can almost swear I caught a faint gleam of fire down there near those negro cabins. You stay here, Dick, and let me investigate.”

He did so, and to his great delight found the remains of a fire near a small stream of water. It had evidently been used for the purpose of heating water to wash with, as a large iron kettle filled with water was yet hanging over the fire. Fred had found his fire, but how to carry any of it away was what puzzled him. He looked around for some kind of a utensil in which he could carry some coals, but could discover none. It was getting so near day he durst not approach any of the cabins for fear of being discovered.

After thinking a moment, Fred took off his coat, and tying up one end of a sleeve, filled it about half full of ashes. He then took some live coals and forced them down in the center of the ashes, taking great care that none of the coals touched the cloth of the sleeve. He then sprinkled

more ashes on top of the coals, completely covering them. Coming back, he said, "Well, I have the fire."

"Where?" asked Darling, looking first at Fred and then at the coat.

"Here in my coat-sleeve," was the laughing reply.

"Fire in your coat-sleeve! Surely, Captain, you must be joking."

"No, Dick; it is all right," and then Fred explained how he had managed it.

Darling looked at him with a queer expression on his face, and then said: "Captain, I take off my hat to you. I have lived on the plains, and I have seen considerable since I have been in the army, but I never heard of fire being carried in a coat-sleeve before."

Day was now breaking, and they began to look for a thick portion of the woods in which to conceal themselves. After traveling about a mile, they found a place which seemed made for their purpose. It was in a hollow, and the underbrush grew so thick as to completely screen from observation anything that might be hidden within it.

"Just the place, Dick," observed Fred, looking around with a satisfied air. "If we are not tracked by dogs, we may stay here a month."

Their first work was to get something to eat, for they had become ravenous. With the ax Fred dug a hole in the ground, making it about a foot deep and about the same size square. He then examined

his fire, and found the coals still alive. These he placed in the bottom of the hole, and placed on them a few dry sticks. The sticks burned without any perceptible smoke; more sticks were added from time to time, until the whole bottom of the hole was a glowing mass of coals.

By making good use of his pocketknife, by the time Fred had the fire ready Darling had the pig skinned and the meat cut in slices. These slices were placed on the coals and nicely broiled.

"If we only had some salt," remarked Fred as he munched his meat, "this would be a feast fit for a king."

"Salt or no salt, it suits me," said Darling. "I find it mighty filling, and one of the sweetest morsels I ever ate."

After they had finished their repast, they broiled the rest of the meat for future use, but while doing so they could hardly keep their eyes open, so heavy were they for lack of sleep.

"Dare, dare we go to sleep?" mumbled Darling, as he nearly fell over, and brought himself up with a start.

"If it were not for the dogs, I would say yes, but now it's risky, awful risky; but Lord! I don't know how I can keep awake," and Fred yawned wearily.

Just then the rumble of thunder caught his ear. The night had been clear, but now that morning had come the sky became overcast, the wind commenced to sigh and moan through the trees, and

the rumble of thunder became more frequent and sounded nearer.

“Dick!” cried Fred, “we are saved once more. A hard rain will wash away all scent from our tracks, and make it impossible for the dogs to follow us. If it rain, we can sleep without fear.”

Hastily going to work, they built a shelter out of pine-boughs and pieces of bark against the side of a large log. They crawled into their “nest,” as they called it, and notwithstanding the wind was howling through the trees, and torrents of rain were beating down on their slight shelter, in less than a minute they were sound asleep.

CHAPTER XVI.

A MEETING WITH SMITH.

MAJOR KENYON'S offer of ten thousand dollars reward for Fred, dead or alive, spurred to activity every soldier that went in pursuit of the fugitives. The fresh pack of dogs steadily followed the trail until they came to the place in the swamp where the fight with the other dogs had taken place. Beyond that the dogs absolutely refused to go, and turned back, cringing with fear. Neither coaxing nor blows could induce them to advance a foot.

"It's no use," said the owner of the dogs. "Satan couldn't induce them dogs to enter the swamp agin, neither is it of eny use. If the Yanks is in the swamp yet, they will die thar if they stay. If they git out, we can strike their trail whar they come out. The only way is to thoroughly patrol the shores of the swamp."

This advice was acted upon, but it was nearly morning before the opposite side of the swamp where Fred and Darling had come out was reached. Here the dogs readily took up the trail.

"The varmints got out after all, and much sooner than I expected," growled the owner of the dogs;

“but we air sure of overhauling them now—that is, if it don’t rain,” he added, as the rumble of distant thunder was heard.

But the rain did come, and as the storm was a severe one the dogs were soon at fault. The soldiers cursed and swore, but it was of no avail, every vestige of the trail was washed away.

“The dogs air of no more account,” exclaimed their driver, with a big oath. “The devil is protecting them Yanks; he knows his own.”

A consultation was held, and as the trail when lost led south, Lieutenant Stevens resolved to scour the country in that direction. Thus precious time was gained by Fred and Darling. But when a report of what was being done was telegraphed to Major Kenyon at Macon, he was not at all pleased. He had a theory of his own, and he proceeded to act upon it at once. His theory was that Fred would make his way eastward some distance, and then try to work his way north to Sherman’s army; or when the fugitives reached Flint River, they might decide to float down that stream to the Chattahoochee, and so on to the Gulf. He would try to frustrate either plan by closely picketing the country along the banks of the Flint, and would go in person and see that it was well done.

There was another consideration which led Major Kenyon to greatly desire to visit the section of country in which he supposed Fred to be hiding. He had just received a letter from a Miss Lucille de Courtney, informing him that she was visiting her

uncle, Judge Chambers, who resided some forty miles south of Macon. This Judge Chambers was the father of Captain Chambers of our story. This was the first knowledge that Major Kenyon had that Miss de Courtney was related to Captain Chambers, and the fact worried him. There was a kind of *quasi* engagement existing between Miss de Courtney and himself, and he feared that the captain might use his influence in prejudicing his cousin against him.

“Not that I would care much,” he muttered, “if I could win Kate Shackelford.”

Major Kenyon lost no time in departing on his mission, and on the very day that Fred and Darling were sleeping so soundly in their improvised shelter beside the log in the pine wood, Major Kenyon was swiftly riding south to lay plans to intercept them.

The sun hung low in the west before Fred and Darling awoke from their deep sleep. They felt much refreshed, and after partaking of a hearty supper of broiled meat, they were ready for their night's march.

As soon as it was fairly dark they started, traveling as nearly as possible in an easterly direction. Making slow progress through the woods and fields, they ventured to take the road. But they had not proceeded far, when they received a sharp challenge.

Instead of answering, they beat a precipitate retreat, a musket-ball whistling past their heads as they did so.

“Who is it?” they heard a voice call out to the guard.

“Some prowling niggers, I reckon; surely they could not be escaped Yankees. No Yanks out of Andersonville could run as them fellows did. Andersonville Yanks are rather weak in the legs; they live too high,” called back the guard, with a coarse laugh.

“There is no help for it,” said Fred, as soon as they were out of danger; “we shall have to keep to the woods and fields; the whole country seems to be guarded. It is fortunate they took us for niggers.”

All through the night they slowly picked their way, and when the light of morning began to appear, they sought out a secluded place in the woods and lay down to sleep.

They were not molested during the day, and as soon as it was dark they continued their journey. It was midnight or after when they reached the Flint River.

Now a heated discussion took place as to what course they had better take. Darling was in favor of trying to find a boat, or of making a raft, and floating down the river to the gulf. Floating down the river, he claimed, would be much easier than traveling through the woods, and they would run less risk of being captured. He remembered reading of how two of Andrews's engine thieves, as they were called, floated down the Chattahoochee and escaped that way.

Fred was decidedly opposed to the plan. Even

if successful, it would be at least two or three months before they could join Sherman's army. "Then," continued Fred, "I believe the danger much greater. It is easier to picket a single river than to picket a whole country."

The dispute grew so warm that there was danger of a serious disagreement, the first they had ever had; but Darling suddenly ended the argument by saying: "Captain, say no more; I will trust you. The time may come when I may ask you to trust me. Then you are my superior officer, and it is presumptuous in me not to obey you."

Fred grasped Darling's hand. "Dick," he exclaimed, "you have conquered; we will try the river."

"No, we won't," stoutly replied Darling. "I am now convinced your plan is the safer; so say no more."

This settled, they both agreed that it would be much better to cross the river. Finding two logs, they paddled and floated across the stream, and as it was getting near morning they concealed themselves in a thicket near the bank, first setting their logs adrift. As soon as it was fairly light, they found, to their consternation, they were close to a road, but as people had already begun to pass and repass, it was too late to attempt to change their place of hiding.

The little meat they had left was unfit to eat, so they had to fast. They took turns, one sleeping while the other watched, but nothing happened

until along in the afternoon, when two horsemen reined in their horses under the shade of a tree, and entered into an earnest conversation. So close were they that Fred and Darling could hear every word that was said.

One of the horsemen wore the uniform of a Confederate officer, while the other was dressed in the uniform of a Georgia State Guard.

To the amazement of both Fred and Darling, they recognized the Confederate officer as Major Kenyon. The first words that they heard were uttered by the officer of the State Guard, who said:

“It is hardly possible, is it, Major, that they have come thus far east and crossed the river?”

“Anything is possible with that Captain Shackelford; he is always doing the unexpected. Where did he get that ax or hatchet with which he killed the dogs? Just think of two men killing or disabling a dozen bloodhounds, and getting off, as far as we know, without a scratch. Wirz thinks the fellows went south after they got out of the swamp, and most of his men are down that way looking after them. I think differently. I believe their starting south was only a blind. I am confident that as soon as that big rain came, they turned east, and are now in the vicinity of this river. They may conclude to try and float down the river to the Gulf. I wish they would, for I should have them sure. I have given orders for the river to be watched so closely that a leaf could hardly float through without being noticed.

At these words Fred pinched Darling's arm. The noble fellow looked into Fred's eyes with a full heart.

"God bless you, Captain!" he whispered; "you knew best."

Then they listened again. The officer was saying, "Do you think they will try the river, Major?"

"No, I do not. I believe they will make north, but to avoid Macon they will make east first. My hope is that I am ahead of them, and that we can get track of them as they cross the river. Not only does every road want to be picketed, but the banks of the river as well. This, Lieutenant, I shall leave to you."

"And I will see that it is well done. If these two Yanks are, as you reckon, near here, I will make it hot for them. You say they are not armed?"

"No fire-arms; only an ax or hatchet."

"Well, an ax will be of little use against this," and the lieutenant significantly tapped the butt of a revolver which protruded from a holster."

"I have no fears, Lieutenant, but that you will do your work thoroughly. But I must be going; I want to be at the plantation of Judge Chambers to-night. It must be nearly fifteen miles there."

"Nearer twenty, Major. Acquainted there? A fine family."

"I have no use for the son," growled Kenyon. "In fact, if it were not that a young lady is visiting there, I would not call at all."

"Ah, Major, then you worship at the shrine of

Cupid as well as of Mars. It is said that Cupid and Mars are close friends, and frequently travel together. 'None but the brave deserve the fair.' Good luck to you, Major."

"Thanks, good-bye; and remember that ten thousand dollars reward," and with these words the major turned his horse and galloped northward.

"Ten thousand dollars in Confederate scrip," muttered the lieutenant as he gazed after the form of the disappearing major. "Bah! it isn't much. I wish it were in Lincoln greenbacks instead. That would be worth working for. D—— old Abe, but his money is all right."

Just then a small dog which had accompanied the lieutenant, in running through the thicket discovered Fred and Darling, and began to bark furiously.

"What in the deuce is the matter with that dog?" exclaimed the lieutenant. "Here, Frisk! here, Frisk!"

But Frisk ran around and around his victims, barking harder than ever. The lieutenant's suspicions were aroused; he turned his horse and began to force him through the thicket toward the point where the dog was, at the same time taking the precaution to draw his revolver.

"Great heavens!" excitedly whispered Fred, "we shall be discovered; our only hope is to take to the river. Quick, Dick, quick!"

"Captain," answered Darling, hurriedly, "don't run. Trust me now. Surrender when he tells you

to''; and with these words, Darling darted behind a tree which stood close by.

The Confederate uttered an exclamation of surprise when he saw Fred, and leveling his revolver, cried: "Hello, Yank! hands up! and be quick about it, too."

Fred threw up his hands without a word, and stood still.

"Well, Yank," continued the lieutenant as he rode his horse close up to Fred, still keeping him covered with his revolver, "in hard luck, aren't you? Where is your comrade? I hear there is a pair of you."

Those were the last words he ever spoke. The ax, thrown like a tomahawk by the sinewy arm of Darling, came flashing through the air. Fairly and squarely it struck the Confederate in the forehead, and he tumbled from his horse, his skull cleft through and through.

Darling stepped out from behind the tree with a smile of triumph on his face. To Fred's look of astonishment he replied: "That is a little trick I learned while on the plains. I have beaten the boss Indian at his own game in throwing the tomahawk."

"Dick," said Fred, "when you told me to trust you, I did, although I had no idea what you intended to do. It took faith, my boy, to stand still and let that fellow ride up to me with that leveled revolver."

"I knew I should not fail you, Captain, when



FRED THREW UP HIS HANDS WITHOUT A WORD.

I told you to trust me," said Darling, as he went and picked up the dead man's revolver. "This is a splendid weapon, Captain," he continued, as he examined the pistol; "in your hands it is good for any half a dozen rebels. It will be a sorry day for any small squad who may attempt to take us now."

Fred took the revolver and looked at it. It was indeed a fine weapon. "Dick," he exclaimed, "with this I feel myself a soldier once more. It is precious, for it is the price of a human life; but it may be the means of saving us and giving us our freedom."

"Poor fellow!" said Darling, looking at the dead officer; "I had nothing against him, but I had to kill him. A fine-looking fellow, too, Captain. War is an awful thing!"

"I have found it so," replied Fred, in a low tone; and his voice trembled as he spoke.

The little dog which had caused the mischief was still barking furiously. "Dick," said Fred, "I am afraid I shall have to shoot that dog; he will bring some one else down on us."

"Hold on, Captain; the sound of a shot may mean our ruin. First let us secure the horse, and then I will fix the dog."

Fortunately the horse proved to be tame, and it was easily caught and securely tied. "Now," said Darling, "for the dog. Let us fall back a few paces from the body."

They did so, and the dog at once ran to his

dead master. Seeing that he did not stir, the faithful little animal caught him by the sleeve and pulled, as if to awaken him. That moment Darling's ax went twirling through the air once more, and master and dog lay dead together.

"No more trouble there," remarked Darling, as he picked up the ax; "but I feel like a double murderer."

"Dick, don't say that; I don't like to hear it. Remember Andersonville. Remember the thousands of wretches there dying by inches. Remember the ghastly row of the dead. Remember there is a price on our heads, and what our fate will be if caught."

"Aye! I remember," cried Darling, with flashing eyes. "And if a thousand men stood in between us and freedom I would take the life of every one. But, Captain, what shall we do with the bodies?"

Fred thought a moment, and then said: "We would better put them in the river. If the bodies are found here, the whole country will be scoured."

"A good idea," answered Darling; "but we had better wait until dark. It may be dangerous now."

They did not have to wait long, and then the bodies of both man and dog were thrown into the river, and the current quickly bore them away.

"Now," said Darling, "let us get out of this uncanny spot. But what shall we do with the horse?"

“Let’s ride him, if he will let us. By this means we can again hide our trail.”

“A capital idea; then I don’t feel like walking. Zounds! I am so hungry I could eat Andersonville mush.”

“Dick,” answered Fred, “come what may, we must find food to-night, but first let us get away from this.”

They had some trouble in making the horse carry double; but at length they conquered, and taking the road, they turned the horse’s head northward. The night was dark, and the only fear they had was of meeting some one. They had ridden about five miles, when they came to a small creek. Stopping to let their horse drink, they were startled by the sound of horses’ feet and the voices of men a short distance in front.

“Dick,” whispered Fred, “there is a large party almost on us; we must let the horse go.”

Hastily dismounting, Fred turned the horse’s head, and gave him a sharp blow, and with a snort he went galloping down the road.

“Who is there?” shouted one of the horsemen. “Halt there! Halt!” and the whole party went thundering by in pursuit.

“A good riddance,” laughed Fred. “I hope the horse will give them a good race before they catch him. Now, Dick, let us make tracks up this creek. Keep in the water; it leaves no tracks.”

After going a short distance, Fred stopped,

and said: "I wonder what is growing in this field; it rustles like corn. Let me see."

In a moment he called out: "Dick, Dick, it's corn—green corn, just right for roasting. Now if we only had some fire, we could have a feast."

"Fire! we shall have fire; I have matches," answered Darling, gleefully.

"Matches, Dick! matches! Where in the world did you get matches?"

"When we put the body of the lieutenant in the river, I thought I might as well see what he had in his pockets, and what do you think I found? A box full of matches, a big roll of Confederate money, and a comb—yes, Captain, a comb. I kept my discovery secret, thinking to give you an agreeable surprise."

"And you have, Dick, you have. Now for a feast, sure enough! And a comb! Why, Dick, we can comb our hair now. The news is almost too good to be true."

It did not take long for each of them to gather an armful of corn. Then they waded up the little stream until they entered a wood. Making their way into the wood for some distance, they halted and made preparations to cook their corn. Digging a hole and making a bed of coals in the same manner as they did for the meat, they were soon feasting on roasted corn.

"I never knew roast corn was so good," remarked Darling, as he tossed aside his sixth cob.

"It is certainly a fine feast," answered Fred.

“I believe this corn is better than roast pork without salt.

“Pork can't hold a candle to it,” laughed Darling, tossing aside another cob. “There is no danger of our suffering for food as long as green corn and our matches hold out.”

The feast over, they felt like new men and were ready for their night's journey, taking for their guide the north star. But the night was dark, and it was slow traveling through the woods and over fields, and they had not made over three miles when the approaching day warned them to seek a secure hiding-place. To make sure of at least one more good meal, they had carried along enough corn for their breakfast.

As they were looking for a place that would suit them, Fred suddenly grasped Darling's arm and whispered: “Listen! I hear footsteps.”

It was now light enough to see, and they soon discovered a negro coming toward them. He passed near them, but did not notice them, as his whole attention seemed to be absorbed in a small basket which he was carrying. Just as he was opposite them, he peeped into the basket as if to see if everything was all right, and they heard him say to himself, “Mighty good breakfast fo' ole massa.”

He was a negro of gigantic size, and as black as ebony.

“Dick,” whispered Fred, “let's follow that fellow and see where he goes.”

“Would it not be dangerous?” asked Darling.

“I think not, even if he discovered us. Union soldiers are hardly ever betrayed by a slave. I want to see to whom he is taking that food. It may be to some escaped prisoner.”

So they followed the negro, being careful to keep out of his sight. He soon disappeared in a hollow. Creeping up to where they could look down in the hollow, they were surprised to see the negro standing before a rude shelter built by placing pieces of bark against a large log.

In front of the little shelter a white man was sitting, eating food from the basket just brought by the negro. Fred gave one look at the man, and then uttered a joyful cry of “Smith! It’s Smith!” and made a rush for him.

The old scout looked up just as the negro, with a growl like a wild beast, sprang in between him and Fred, brandishing a huge club. Fred would have been struck to the earth, if he had not stopped in his headlong rush.

Smith saw who it was, and cried out: “A friend, Joe, a friend; it’s the captain.”

The club slowly sank to the ground, and the next moment the old scout and Fred were in each other’s arms. Then Darling had to give him a big hug. It was a joyful meeting, that, in the woods of Georgia, and the gigantic negro stood and looked wonderingly on.

When the surprise and congratulations were over, Fred asked, “How in the world did you get here, Smith?”

"I never would hev bin heah if it had not bin for Joe," answered Smith, looking with kindly eyes on the negro.

"Tell us all about your escape, Smith; it must have been simply wonderful. Darling and I both thought that you would be really dead by morning when we saw you carted away in that fearful load."

"Hev something to eat fust," said the old man.

The negro Joe roasted the corn which Fred and Darling had brought, and with the provisions that Smith had they all made a magnificent meal. The old scout then told the following story:

"That war a fearful ride with all of them dead men, an' I war furtunate in bein' placed on top. It would hev bin awful, all of them dead piled on me. I shall never forget how the po' fellers under me and on each side of me felt, so cold and clammy. Once outside, we war piled off like so many dead dogs, and left until mornin' to be put in the ground.

"It seemed as if they would never get to sleep; and thar I lay with the dead all round me, an' even on top of me. I got cold—oh, so cold! as cold as the corpses. At last I could stand it no longer, and I crawled away—crawled over the dead—I don't know how many. When I got clear of the dead, I crept along until I got in the shadder of some tents and managed to stagger to my feet. Jest as I did so I heard some one cry out: 'Oh! my God, my God!' and thar stood a solger scared almost to death. He thought I war a ghost.

Then he asked, all trembly like, 'Who air yo'?' 'John Smith,' said I, 'John Smith, of ole Kentuck, an' for God's sake knock me in the head; don't put me back in that pen.' Then he told me he was one of the Union boys who worked on the outside under parole. 'Can't yo' do somethin' fo' me?' I asked. At fust he refused, then he said: 'Smith, a dead man who has come to life should be saved; I will try an' save yo' if I hang for it.'

"He took me to whar a big pile of boxes was, and pointing to one, said: 'Git in thar, lay still until I cum back.' He war gone a long time, then he cum back with an' ole blouse for me to put on, and a piece of corn bread. 'Now,' said he, 'take these, an' when yo' heah the guards call out, "Twelve o'clock, and all is well," yo' git. Go that way, the guard will not trouble yo'. Good-bye'; an' he was gone.

"I did as he said, and though I passed within ten feet of a guard, he never see me; was lookin' the other way. But I foun' I could hardly walk. I staggered on an' on, an' at last foun' myself in the woods, an' lay down under a tree. Oh, it was sweet to heah the wind singin' through the trees an' to think I was free. 'Jes' let me die right heah,' I thought, an' it war all I asked. I reckon I must hev dozed, fo' I was startled by some one runnin' through the woods, and then some one stubbed his toe agin me and fell.

"'Fo' the Lawd, what's dat?' he said, as he scrambled to his feet, an' then I knew it was a nig-

ger. 'It's me, John Smith,' said I; and then he asked, 'Air yo' a Yank?' an' I say 'Yes.'

"That nigger was Joe, heah. He told me he had bin workin' on the stockade, an' was runnin' away back to his ole master, they 'bused him so. An' what do yo' reckon that nigger did? He tuk me in his arms like a baby. Since then he has toted me for miles. He has fit over me for our lives, killin' two bloodhounds. He has toted me thro' swamps, swam rivers with me on his back, and found food for me to eat. Heah the fever tuk me, an' he has made friends with the niggers on the plantation, and gets me these nice things to eat. He says he will never leave me."

"Captain," continued the old man, with the tears streaming down his cheeks, "I never tho't much of niggers; I hev said they had no souls, that they was fit for nothin' but slaves. But, Captain, Joe is white—white clar thro'."

Fred took the big black hand of Joe in his, and said, "Joe, God bless you, you are a hero!"

Joe shuffled his feet, wiped his eyes with the back of his hand, and said: "Massa Captin', I die fo' de Yankees. I lub Massa Linkum. I lub Massa Smith heah; ole Joe nevah leave him."

Fred soon learned the history of Joe. His master lived near Milledgeville; he was a good master, but he had hired or given Joe's services to the Confederacy for the purpose of building the stockade at Andersonville. Here he had been cruelly used, and he had run away, thinking to get back to his old

master and his wife and children. He met Smith as related, and never was a dog more devoted to a master than was Joe to Smith.

Fred told Smith the story of his and Darling's escape, and when he had finished, he said: "Now, Smith, we will all journey together toward the North and freedom."

The old scout shook his head. "Captain," he said, "I shall never see ole Kentuck agin, or the ole woman and the gals."

The old man's eyes were unnaturally bright, and he was burning with fever. It did not require a physician to tell that his words were true, and that the old scout's days were nearly spent.

"Captain," earnestly continued Smith, "yo' must leave me; yo' and Dick must go on; Joe will take care of me."

Fred took him by the hand, and gently said: "My old comrade, more than once you have risked your life for me. You have stood by me in my hour of sorest need, and now do you ask me to desert you? No, comrade, no. If die you must away from your old Kentucky home, away from wife and children, it is my place to receive your last words, and bear them to those you love. I will never leave you, Smith, as long as your life lasts. Don't ask me."

The old scout gently pressed Fred's hand, and turning away his face, his emaciated form shook with convulsive sobs.

CHAPTER XVII.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

WHEN Smith found that Fred and Darling would not leave him, he declared that he would accompany them, and insisted that they should continue their journey as soon as it was dark.

“The nearer I can die to ole Kentuck,” he said, “the happier I shall be. I shall live longer on my feet than I shall layin’ heah.”

Fred believed this to be true, so he gave his consent to resuming their flight as soon as darkness came. Their coming had put new life in the old scout, and he seemed much better. This determination to move, although they did not know it at the time, saved the whole party from death or capture.

The State troops which pursued the horse abandoned by Fred and Darling, captured him after an exciting chase of about five miles. It was recognized as belonging to Lieutenant Brown of the State troops. Instantly all was excitement. Where was Brown? All through the night the search was kept up, without success. By morning the whole country was in a state of ferment. The news was quickly carried to Major Kenyon at Judge Cham-

bers's. The major was astounded at the tidings, and came hurrying back. He was in a towering rage, for he had met with a cold reception from Miss Lucille de Courtney, a reception no lover would expect from a lady whom he hoped to marry.

Lucille de Courtney was a resident of Columbia, South Carolina. When she was about sixteen years of age, she met Major Kenyon, who paid her marked attention. Miss de Courtney was of French Huguenot extraction, and inherited all the strict adherence to principle of her ancestors, as well as a fair quantity of their fiery disposition.

She was called the most beautiful girl in South Carolina. Her eyes were dark brown, her eye-lashes long and black, and her hair was of that beautiful indescribable brown which gleams like gold when the sunlight falls upon it. She was neither blond nor brunette, but the rich blood flowing beneath gave a faint rosy tint to a complexion as clear as alabaster.

Major Kenyon was of an aristocratic family, rich and handsome. There was hardly a scheming mother in South Carolina but would have rejoiced to have Arthur Kenyon for a son-in-law. He was in manners a perfect gentleman in the presence of ladies, a master of small talk and flattery. By nature he was cold, cruel, and selfish, but these characteristics he kept in the background. His habits were also such as not to commend him to a true woman. But when a man is rich and hand-

some, his personal habits have little to do with his entrance into society.

Flattered with the attentions of such a popular man and leader of society as Arthur Kenyon, when he proposed Miss de Courtney referred him to her father, for she was motherless.

But Mr. de Courtney demurred, not only on account of the extreme youth of his daughter, but also on the account that Kenyon had just entered the army.

“You should not ask Lucille,” said he, “to enter into an engagement at her age, especially in these troublesome times. If, when the war is over, you and she remain of the same mind, I shall offer no objections. But I shall positively at this time prohibit an engagement, for with my old-fashioned views, I consider an engagement almost as sacred as marriage.”

And with this Major Kenyon had to be content, for Lucille readily yielded to the wishes of her father—in fact, was glad it was so.

Three years had passed since that time. During this period they met two or three times. But owing to circumstances, two years had passed since they had met. Mr. de Courtney was sent to Europe on an important secret mission, and while he was away Lucille was sent to a convent to school, and during all this time her letters to Major Kenyon were cold, formal affairs, merely such as one would write to an acquaintance. As she grew older she began to doubt her love for him. She also heard rumors

in regard to his habits and disposition which, if true, would render her miserable as his wife, and she resolved to tell him, when she had an opportunity, that there could be nothing between them.

Major Kenyon noticed that her letters were less frequent and very cold and formal, but he considered that it was owing to the rules of the school. His vanity was so great he thought that even if she was forgetting him, he had only to see her and his victory was assured—that is, if he wished to win her, of which he was not quite sure. It all depended on what he thought. Her wishes did not enter into his considerations.

“All I ask,” he said to himself, “is that she keep herself free. I shall soon have her breaking her heart, if I smile on another girl.”

Miss de Courtney was now out of school. She had written to Major Kenyon that she was staying with her uncle, Judge Chambers, and the major eagerly embraced the opportunity of visiting her.

It was so late when he reached Judge Chambers's that night after he had separated from Lieutenant Brown that Miss de Courtney had retired, and he did not meet her until the next morning at breakfast. She welcomed him merely as an acquaintance, and he saw no look of love in her face.

Major Kenyon had heard of how beautiful she had grown, but he was not prepared for the vision of loveliness that stood before him. Kate Shackelford was forgotten in an instant, and he resolved that come what would he would win back Lucille's

love, if he had lost it; and he grew pale at the thought. But he would win her; never was cavalier more devoted, more true, than he would be—in fact, Major Kenyon was madly, desperately in love.

But hardly was the meal finished, and as yet he had had no opportunity for a private interview with Miss de Courtney, when the news came of Lieutenant Brown's disappearance.

"Why," he cried, "it was only last evening I left him, after giving him full directions about capturing two escaped Yankee prisoners whom I suspected of lurking in the neighborhood."

"And he has not been seen since," replied the messenger. "Is it possible he could have come across the escaped Yankees, and met with foul play?"

"It is hardly probable," said the major; "for he was armed, and the Yankees had no arms except an ax or hatchet."

"But even with a hatchet they could have ambushed him, or had it hidden in their clothes and taken him unawares. I tell you, Major, I fear the worst. Lieutenant Brown was a man who would not hesitate to attempt to capture those Yankees, if he came across them."

"Where did you say the horse was captured?" asked the major, in an anxious voice.

The man told him as near as he was able. "That is very near the place where I left him," replied the major. "This must be looked into at once." Then speaking to Miss de Courtney, he said: "I am so sorry duty calls me away before

I have had time to speak more than a few words to you; but I will return as soon as possible." Lowering his voice, he whispered: "You do not know how glad I am to see you, Lucille. The thought that at some future time I might claim you has been more than life to me"; and he attempted to take her hand, but a look which he saw in her face stopped him.

Without waiting for a reply, he exclaimed aloud: "To a soldier duty is sometimes a hard master. Farewell, until I see you again"; and putting spurs to his horse, he galloped swiftly southward, with a tempest raging in his bosom. For the first time he began to doubt himself. She might be harder to win than he thought; and he cursed Captain Shackelford for being the means of calling him from her side. But if in the power of man, he would return successful and crowned with honor.

He had a good twenty miles' ride before him, but he covered it in two hours. Nothing had been found as yet of the missing lieutenant. A careful search was made, and the place where the lieutenant met his death was discovered. The bloody stains were found, and the trail which led to the river.

"He has been murdered and his body thrown into the river," declared the major, with a fearful oath.

"Can the escaped Yankee prisoners have done it?" demanded the excited citizens who had joined in the search.

“Who else could have done it?” demanded the major.

“We will string them up like dogs if we catch them,” cried the excited men.

“Catch them! They must be caught. String them up, string them up, as you say; don’t give the Confederate government the trouble of trying them. By the way, I remember Brown had a small dog with him, and just as I rode away I heard the dog bark. Has the dog been seen?”

No, it had not.

Just then some men who had been searching the river below came back, bringing with them the body of the dog, which they had found floating in the eddy of the stream. It had been cleft almost in twain by a blow from a sharp instrument, evidently an ax.

“What did I tell you?” cried the major. “We now know the fate of poor Brown; he was murdered with an ax, and that devil and spy, Shackelford, did it.”

Dogs were placed on the trail, but they ran around and around, utterly at fault.

“Could the fellows have taken wings and flown away?” asked the owner of the dogs.

“It is not a case of wings,” replied one of the party; “like wise men they took to the river. Water leaves no trail. They are well down the river by this time.”

“If they are,” said the major, “they should

have been captured before this. I have the river thoroughly picketed."

"Perhaps they crossed the river and took to the woods on the other side," said another.

"We will search everywhere," replied the major; "but I have a different opinion."

"What is it, Major?" they all asked in the same breath.

"How did Lieutenant Brown's horse come five miles up the road?" asked Major Kenyon. "I will tell you. Those fellows rode him away. Hearing a squad of horsemen coming, they abandoned the horse, after turning him around, and sent him flying down the road for you fellows to chase."

"It could be done," cried the owner of the dogs; "and by so doing they would leave no trail. It's no wonder the dogs couldn't follow them."

"We must look everywhere," said the major, "but I believe they went north on the horse. You, Bowen, take a party, and thoroughly scour the country below. You, Hughes, take another party, cross the river, and search the country in every direction. I, with the third party, will proceed up the river to where the horse was abandoned."

This was agreed to, and they separated, all going their several ways. A storm was gathering around the heads of Fred and Darling, and as yet they were unaware of it. But one thing they knew, and that was that if captured there would be no mercy shown them. The slaying of the officer of the Home Guard would be avenged.

There resided about eight miles south of Judge Chambers's a planter named Norton. The two families were very intimate, and on this very day Mrs. Chambers, with the other ladies of the family, had made an engagement to go down and spend the afternoon with the Nortons. Judge Chambers was to come down in the evening, take tea with the family, and accompany the ladies home.

Now it was the Norton plantation which was visited by the negro Joe, and it was from one of Norton's slaves, a kind-hearted fellow named George, that he received his supplies for Smith.

When Mrs. Chambers arrived, she found the family intensely excited over the reported disappearance of Lieutenant Brown, and little else was talked of.

Judge Chambers arrived late in the evening, and a few minutes afterwards Major Kenyon and his party put in an appearance. They had been scouring the country all day, but had failed to find the slightest trace of the fugitives.

Both Judge Chambers and Mr. Norton were greatly shocked when they heard that Lieutenant Brown had been murdered, as they termed it.

"Who could have done it?" asked Mr. Norton, his voice trembling with excitement.

"Why, it was those escaped Yankee prisoners, that devil Shackelford and his companion. They are desperate men. If it had not been for Captain Chambers, I would have had Shackelford arrested as a spy long before he reached Andersonville.

I have an account to—” Major Kenyon suddenly stopped. In his excitement he had forgotten that Judge Chambers was present.

“What of Captain Chambers?” asked the judge, his voice full of suppressed rage. “Who is this Shackelford? And do you mean to accuse my son of shielding a spy and murderer?”

“No, no, Judge!” quickly replied Kenyon, anxious to make amends for his mistake. “Your son is too true a soldier to shield an enemy of his country; but he erred from mistaken ideas of chivalry. Do you know it was this same Shackelford who came so near killing him on Lookout?”

“Impossible!” exclaimed the judge.

“Nevertheless it is true. When the Yankee Colonel Capron was routed at the close of the Stoneman raid, this Shackelford was taken prisoner by your son. He knew him, and treated him with the greatest consideration. The fellow passed himself off as a private soldier, and under an assumed name. I told Chambers the fellow was an officer, and I believed a celebrated Yankee spy, but he would not believe it. Unfortunately, I was ordered away on duty, and before I returned the prisoners had been sent to Andersonville. By this time I had the best of evidence that the fellow was no other than Captain Fred Shackelford, the chief of General Sherman’s scouts. He is also known as a spy, he having been in our lines several times dressed in Confederate uniform. By the time I had gathered together the threads of the tangled skein and gone

to Andersonville to arrest him, he had escaped. I would say I found a cousin of Shackelford, a Captain Pennington, and unfortunately chief of our secret service, at Andersonville when I arrived, and I believe he had come with the purpose of shielding him."

"Why! why!" cried Mr. Norton; "this looks like treason in our own ranks. Who is this Captain Shackelford that even Confederate officers try to shield?"

"He is the son of General Richard Shackelford of our army."

"Impossible!" cried both Judge Chambers and Mr. Norton in the same breath.

"True, nevertheless. Even if I had caught the fellow at Andersonville, a strong influence would have been brought to save his neck; but the murder of Lieutenant Brown has done one thing—no influence will now save him, if caught."

"I should think not; we will give him a short shrift, and not trouble the military, if we lay hands on him," Mr. Norton exclaimed; and for emphasis he brought his cane down with such force as to break it.

"Was Lieutenant Brown armed?" suddenly asked Judge Chambers.

"Yes; he had a fine revolver."

"Then if this Shackelford murdered him, he has his revolver, and from your account he will be a dangerous man to attack."

This phase of the question seemed to disconcert

the major for a moment; then he answered, "If he were thrice armed, no brave man would hesitate a moment to capture him if opportunity offered."

Tea was now announced, and for the first time Major Kenyon became aware that Miss de Courtney was present. He at once became all attention, and strove to make himself agreeable.

The murder of Lieutenant Brown, and the fugitive Yankee prisoners, were almost the sole topics of conversation. Judge Chambers told how his son, with three soldiers, had met a solitary Federal soldier on Lookout Mountain, and how in a twinkling three of them had been shot down.

"Gordon says," continued the judge, "that the Yankee was riding one of the finest horses he ever saw, and it was the horse he was after when he was shot."

"Captain Chambers is riding that same horse now," said the major; and in spite of himself a dark frown passed over his face, but he wisely kept to himself the full particulars. Instead, he told how for all day he had been searching for a clue to the fugitives, but had not been able to find the slightest. "Yet," he added, "I am almost certain they came this way, and for aught I know may be lurking in this vicinity at this very moment."

Just then a mulatto house-servant who was waiting on the table, and who had been listening to the conversation with open mouth, thinking to curry favor with her master, said:

“Massa, Jane, one ob de field hands told me a strange nigger hab bin hangin’ round fo’ fee fo’ days, an’ dat nigger George hab bin feedin’ him.”

For a moment Mr. Norton was dumb with surprise, and then he thundered: “Why didn’t you tell me this before? I will have you stripped and flogged like a common nigger, and then sent to the fields.”

The girl threw herself on her knees before her master, crying: “Oh, massa, massa! don’t flog me, don’t send me to de fields. I was ’fraid to tell; de field niggers kill me, suah.”

“Don’t fool with the girl,” broke in Major Kenyon; “this nigger George is the one we want.”

George was sent for, and he came in with fear and trembling.

“George,” demanded Mr. Norton, “have you been feeding a runaway nigger?”

George’s black skin turned the color of clay, and he tried to speak, but his voice died away in a gurgle.

“Tell the truth, you black rascal,” thundered his master, “or I will have you skinned alive. Here, Kelly (to his overseer), take this fellow out, trice him up, and make his back smoke.”

Mr. Norton was naturally a kind master, but now he was greatly excited, and his anger was terrible.

“Don’t, massa, don’t!” shrieked George, groveling in terror at Mr. Norton’s feet; “I tell de truth, de whole truth. Befo’ de Lawd I will.”

“Out with it, then, quick!”

“I bin feedin’ a strange nigger, but he no run-away nigger; he goin’ back to his massa. He bin a-workin’ on de stockade at Andersonville, an’ de solgers ’buse him; so he runnin’ back to his ole massa.”

“George, how long have you been feeding this strange nigger?”

“Fo’ days, massa.”

“Yet you say he is on his way back to his master. Why has he skulked around here for four days? Speak quick, you rascal.”

“He say, he say thar is ’nother nigger with him, sick, can’t trabble.”

“Ha!” exclaimed Major Kenyon, “that explains it all. This strange nigger says he is from Andersonville. No doubt he is with those escaped Yankees. Find him and we shall find them.”

“I reckon you are right, Major,” answered Mr. Norton. “George, where is this strange nigger hiding?”

“Don’t know eggsactly, massa. So’th in de woods somewhar.”

“You rascal, you are lying!”

“Fo’ de Lawd, no, massa. He would nebber tell me. Say I bettah not know.”

“Let us lose no time,” cried Major Kenyon; “let us search the woods to the south.”

“You are right,” said Mr. Norton. “Kelly, you lock George in the dungeon; I will attend to his case afterwards. Then loose the dogs; we

must get on the track of these murderers as soon as possible."

By this time Major Kenyon had his men mounted and all ready, and in an incredibly short time the whole party were going in the direction pointed out by George.

It was now after nightfall, but it was bright starlight, and the party had proceeded barely half a mile when the dogs raised a cry and started off at full speed. The horsemen with a shout of triumph followed them, and had not ridden far when they came on the dogs battling with a huge negro. They called on him to surrender, but instead he hurled at the nearest horseman a stone which he had in his hand to beat off the dogs, knocking the rider from his horse. Then he turned and ran.

A half a dozen revolvers blazed, and the negro fell. He was carried back to the plantation and placed on the floor of the porch. The wounded negro was our friend Joe, and it was plain to be seen he had but a few moments to live.

"Now, you black rascal," exclaimed Major Kenyon, "tell us what you know, quick! or I will cut your black heart out."

Joe slowly opened his eyes, already glazing in death. Without paying any attention to the threat, he gasped:

"I Massa Willum Wood nigger; Massa Wood libs near Milledgeville. He let me to the sogers at Andersonville. Da 'buse Joe, da whip him, so I run away to git back to Massa Wood; he good

massa. Won't yo' tell him an' Susan, dat my wife, what hab becum ob ole Joe?"

"Tell me who were with you in the woods, or I will burn your eyes out," cried Major Kenyon, in fury.

Here a soft hand was laid on the major's shoulder, and a tender voice trembling with indignation said: "Major Kenyon, you forget yourself. Don't you see the man is dying?" and before he could interpose, Miss de Courtney knelt by the side of the negro, and bending over him, whispered: "What is it, Joe? What message do you want to send to your wife?"

A great joy shone in the dying eyes of the slave. "God bless yo', missy!" he gasped; "tell Susan and de chillens dat Joe lubbed dem to the end."

By this time Major Kenyon had recovered from his surprise. "Miss de Courtney," he gently said, "forgive me, but this is no place for you. Don't you see it is much more important that the perpetrators of a foul murder be caught than that the message of a dying nigger to his wench be received? This nigger knows something; he must speak before he dies."

Miss de Courtney's face flamed, but she arose, and without a word withdrew, followed by the other ladies of the household.

"Now," fiercely demanded Kenyon of Joe, "who were with you? Yankees? Tell quick; I have the irons heating."

"Nobuddy—wid—Joe. No—Yankees."

“You lie! I will have—” But Major Kenyon suddenly stopped. Joe was beyond his reach; he was dead, and faithful to the last.

Major Kenyon uttered an angry oath. “The devil has cheated us,” he exclaimed; “but we will find them. To your horses, men.”

Again the whole party with the dogs set out. The rude hut which Joe had built for Smith was soon found, but it was empty. The trail was taken up and readily followed to the creek, but there it was lost. As the trail, when lost, led eastward, the pursuers turned up the creek instead of going down. After beating through the woods until midnight to locate the trail, they returned to Mr. Norton’s, angry and discouraged, to await the light of day.

The next morning they searched down the creek, and discovered Fred’s footsteps which he had made near its mouth.

“They have come this way,” said Major Kenyon. “No doubt they have crossed the river to get into the thick woods on the other side”; and he ordered the whole party to cross the river and to search the country thoroughly. But he made it his business to ride to Judge Chambers’s; he was burning to see Miss de Courtney.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LUCILLE DE COURTNEY.

WHEN Joe learned that his sick charge was to accompany Fred and Darling in their flight, he announced his intention "ob goin' norf wid dem," instead of going back to his old master. Realizing what a valuable ally he would make, Fred and Darling gave their consent, to the great joy of the old scout.

As they were not to start until after dark, Joe asked permission to visit his friends on the plantation once more, saying: "George hab promised me sum mo' good things fo' Massa Smith. Dar will be no danger; da will be waitin' fo' me." So Fred gave his consent.

As soon as it began to grow dark, Joe started. His last words were, "Be back in half hour."

For some reason Fred felt a premonition of danger, and concluded to follow Joe as near to the cabins of the slaves as he dared. But he had not gone far when he was startled by the noise and uproar occasioned by the discovery of Joe. He heard the fierce bay of the hounds, the shouts of the men, and then the sharp volley. He knew it was all over with Joe.

Running back at full speed, in a few words he

told his companions what had happened, and said their safety lay only in instant flight.

“There is no hope for Joe,” he exclaimed; “that volley finished him. Poor fellow! He has lost his life, but in so doing may have saved ours. That party had in some way discovered we were here, and had set out to capture us, when they unexpectedly ran onto Joe. It may give us a little time to escape.”

Hastily gathering what food they had, they took to flight. The news seemed to put almost supernatural strength into the old scout, and he started out apparently as strong as Fred or Darling.

“To the south,” said Fred, “until we reach the creek, and then we will wade down that. I would rather keep near the river; we may save ourselves some time by crossing it. Before entering the creek, let us go a short way up the bank, so as to create the impression that our course is eastward.”

This they did, and, as we have seen, led Major Kenyon and his party to search the country first to the east. This proved of great benefit to the fugitives, and gave them a brief respite. They waded down the creek, crossing the road where they had abandoned the horse the night before. Soon the water deepened, and they knew they must be approaching the river.

To Fred's great joy he discovered a small stream flowing down from the north. “This is fortunate,” he exclaimed; “we will follow up this stream. The dogs will have a hard time following our trail this

time. But rest here a few moments, boys; I want to reconnoiter down the creek a little, and see how far it is to the river."

As the water was quite deep, he walked in the edge of the stream, and seemed to be quite indifferent when he stepped upon the bank. He did not go more than a quarter of a mile before he came to the river, and around the mouth of the creek, he made quite a number of tracks, all leading into the river.

"Now, if this don't fool them and make them think we have crossed the river, I'm mistaken," he laughed to himself.

On his way back he was very careful to keep in the water, so as not to leave a single backward track. He found Darling and Smith growing a little anxious over his prolonged absence, but when he told them what he had done they at once saw the wisdom of it.

The little party now began to make their way up the stream. Smith, who had steadily refused assistance, affirming that he was keeping up easily, suddenly stumbled and fell. The halt, and standing in the water while Fred was absent, had chilled him, and his unnatural strength had given way. He tried to rise, but sank back in a faint. The body refused to obey the iron will any longer. Tenderly raising him in his arms, Fred pressed on.

"He is no heavier than a child," he said to Darling; "nothing but skin and bone."

They slowly made their way up the stream, tak-

ing turns in carrying Smith, who, after he had recovered consciousness, proved a very unwilling burden. He was so weak, however, he could resist but feebly. The stream soon became so small they left it, and after a march of some five miles they found themselves utterly exhausted and forced to halt.

Finding a little glade not far from the bank of the river, and securely protected from observation by a thicket of brush, they decided to camp. Little did Fred think when they halted that they were on the plantation of Judge Chambers, the father of Captain Chambers. Both Fred and Darling decided that if not compelled to leave, they would stay at this place until Smith died, for it was evident the old scout could not live more than two or three days longer, and it would be cruel to try to move him, and desert him they would not.

The day passed without incident until late in the afternoon, when Fred, leaving Smith in the care of Darling, carefully made his way to the edge of the woods to look out over the country. Nearly two miles away he could see a fine old-fashioned plantation-house, and in the rear a little village of slave-cabins. Fields of corn and cotton stretched away for miles, for Judge Chambers owned a plantation of five thousand acres. Slaves were working in the fields, and the whole scene was one of peace and plenty. The valley of the Flint had never felt the blighting touch of war.

Long did Fred gaze on the beautiful landscape,

and thoughts of his Kentucky home came surging to his mind. Would he ever see it again? God only knew. A bridle-path ran near him, winding through the woods toward the river. He followed it, and had just reached the bank of the stream when he heard the poundings of a horse's hoofs coming down the bridle-path. Hastily drawing his revolver, he dodged into the bushes on one side of the path.

Then the shrill screams of a woman smote his ears. A moment more and Fred was horrified to see a horse coming down the path at a terrific rate of speed. The rider, a young woman, seemed to have lost control of her mount. The reins hung loose in her nerveless hands, and she swayed to and fro as if about to lose her seat.

Straight as an arrow from the bow the horse made for the river. The bank of the stream was here high, and the current swept against it with tremendous force, boiling and foaming, as though in rage at being turned aside. A plunge over that bank, and nothing could save horse or rider.

Fred saw it all at a glance, yet to attempt a rescue might mean capture and death. But the danger of the lady appealed to everything chivalric in his nature. He would save her, even if it meant death to him. She had ceased to scream, and as the horse neared the brink and the dark waters of the river could be seen leaping and foaming below, Fred thought he saw her glance upward and her lips move as though in prayer.



THERE CAME THE SHARP CRACK OF A REVOLVER.

One bound more and the horse would be over. There came the sharp crack of a revolver, and the horse fell dead with a bullet through his brain, his head hanging over the very brink. The fall of the horse threw his rider on the very edge of the bank, and Fred had just time to rush forward and drag the unconscious form of the lady back, when the crumbling bank gave way, and the body of the horse rolled into the water below.

Fred bore the unconscious rider back to a little spring which bubbled forth from under the roots of a stalwart pine, and laying her gently on the ground, commenced to bathe her face. He now saw that she was young, not more than eighteen or nineteen, and wondrously fair. So long did she remain in a swoon that Fred began to fear that she was dead; but at length her eyelids began to tremble, she gave a little sigh, and the eyes slowly opened.

A look of wonderment came over her face as she saw Fred bending over her. She attempted to rise, but sank back.

“Where am I?” she asked, faintly. “What has happened?”

“You are safe, lady, safe,” replied Fred.

“Oh, I remember now!” And a shudder swept over her. “Selim ran away; he was about to plunge into the river. I gave myself up for lost. I—I remember nothing more.” Here she attempted to rise again, and giving her his hand, Fred gently assisted her to her feet.

"Are you hurt?" anxiously asked Fred, as she gazed around her as if still dazed.

"Hurt? Why, did Selim throw me? Where is Selim?"

"Dead and in the river, where I thank God you are not," reverently answered Fred.

"You saved me, then," she cried; "you saved me!"

"Yes, madam; I shot your horse as he was about to plunge into the river, and just had time to snatch you away when the bank crumbled. I bore you back unconscious to this little spring, where I have had the happiness to see you revive, and trust you have had no serious injury."

"Oh, how can I ever repay you? Come and let my uncle and aunt thank you."

"Impossible!" grimly replied Fred. "Do I look as if I should be a welcome guest in any respectable household?"

For the first time she regarded him closely. A look of amazement and horror swept over her face, and she recoiled as from a viper.

"Who are you?" she whispered, with white lips. "You are not one of the escaped Yankees the whole country is looking for, are you?"

"I am afraid I am."

"Oh, tell me you are not, tell me you are not!" And she wrung her hands in her distress, and leaned forward as if pleading for an affirmative answer.

"I am a Union soldier, and am escaping from Andersonville," was Fred's answer.

“Then—then you murdered Lieutenant Brown.” And again that look of horror came over her face. “Why did you save me?” she exclaimed, passionately; “why did you touch me with your bloody hands?” and shuddering, she shrank farther from him.

If a sword-thrust had pierced his body, it would not have given him keener pain than these words. For a moment he stood as pale as his accuser; then the hot blood rushed to his face, and he cried:

“For God’s sake, hear me before you condemn me! I was a prisoner in Andersonville, where men starve, rot alive, die by inches. I escaped; I swore that I would never be taken alive. A Confederate officer rode on me, his revolver was at my head. My comrade slew him, and saved my life. It was not murder; it was self-defense.”

“And yet you killed him?” she said, with the same look of horror on her face.

“Madam,” Fred cried, in desperation, “suppose you had a father, a brother, in some loathsome Northern prison, starving, dying, and he should escape. Only a Northern soldier stood between him and life and liberty. Would you call him a murderer and turn from him in horror if he struck the blow that made him free?”

“No, no; I would curse him if he did not strike. He would not be a De Courtney if he did not.”

“Yet you condemn me because I struck, you shrink from me as from a vile criminal. Go and

tell Major Kenyon I am here, go and tell him that the quarry he seeks is trapped. Place the halter around my neck, if you will, I will not restrain you; but remember, you deliver to death one who has saved your life."

She looked at him with wondering eyes; then a deep blush, as of shame, swept over her face. It receded, leaving her pale and trembling in every limb.

"Don't," she cried, "don't judge me so cruelly. But for you I should now be lying in that slimy river. You saved my life. I cannot, I will not, betray the one who saved me. But go, go; do not let this secret lie upon my soul."

"You have not yet told me whom I have rescued. Will you not tell me that, if I must go?"

"What can it matter? But I am Lucille de Courtney, and you are—are—"

"Captain Frederic Shackelford," replied Fred, with a bow.

"I knew it. You are the one that Major Kenyon is after. For some reason he seems to hate you."

Just then the sound of hoofs came to their ears.

"Oh, run, run!" cried the girl; "they are seeking me, they will see you. Run, for my sake as well as your own. It would kill me to deliver you over to them."

"Thank you," said Fred, simply. "Farewell"; and taking her hand, he pressed the dainty fingers to his lips, and was gone.

A moment later Judge Chambers and Major Kenyon came galloping up.

“Thank God! safe, safe!” cried the judge, springing from his horse and clasping the girl to his breast. “Lucille, we were told your horse had run away, and that he was headed straight for the river.”

“So he did,” she replied, with a hysterical little laugh.

“And where is Selim?”

“In the river,” she replied, with a shudder.

“Lucille, you act strange; you are hurt—where? where? Tell me all about it, child.”

“I do not think that I am injured, uncle, only badly frightened and nervous. Oh, it was frightful! Selim ran away with me, and headed straight for the river. The last I remember was the dark water right ahead of me. And then I must have jumped, or been thrown. I must have been stunned or dazed, for when I came fully to myself I was here by the little spring. Oh, uncle, take me home! I feel faint.”

“Major,” shouted the judge, “ride for your life to the house for a carriage, and have Cato go for a surgeon; let him ride the fleetest horse. She is more hurt than she thinks.”

Without a word, the major was off. To do him justice, he loved Lucille as well as he could love any being except himself, and he was greatly alarmed lest she had been severely injured. His message created consternation in the household. Dispatching Cato for the surgeon, Major Kenyon

accompanied the carriage back. He found Miss de Courtney to all appearances much better, and to his eager inquiries she declared that she was feeling quite well, that it was only the fright and the shock of being thrown that had overcome her; that she was now feeling as well as usual.

“You do not know what happiness it brings me to hear you say this, Lucille,” he replied, in a low voice.

“Isn’t it strange,” spoke up the judge, “that Lucille has not the slightest remembrance how she came here by the spring?”

Miss de Courtney seemed strangely agitated by what her uncle said, but the major quietly answered: “It is not strange; she was stunned by the fall, and wandered as far as the spring before she fully recovered consciousness.”

“Then what a providence it was she turned from the river instead of toward it,” said the judge.

The major happened to look down at the little spring, and he saw something that startled him. There imprinted in the soft margins were the tracks of a man, and they were too small to have been made by the judge. A horrible suspicion took possession of him. By this time Miss de Courtney had been placed in the carriage, and was being driven away.

Major Kenyon remained behind, and as soon as the coast was clear carefully examined the ground. Yes, there were the tracks, plain and unmistakable. He followed them to the river. There was the

crumbling bank, and there in the soft earth were the same tracks. Evidently some one had rescued Miss de Courtney. Who? And why was she trying to keep it a secret?

“Great heavens!” he suddenly ejaculated, and he fairly staggered at the thought. “I have seen those tracks before. I saw them where poor Brown was killed. I saw them around the rude shelter in the woods at the Norton place. It was that Yankee, Shackelford, that rescued her, and she is concealing the fact. I will have him now. But stop! She is grateful; she will not want to see the man hanged that has saved her life. It may give me a hold on her. Captain Shackelford, you may go if your going will give me a hold on Lucille de Courtney.”

Filled with the idea, he rode back to the house. On her arrival Miss de Courtney was nearly smothered by the embraces and kisses of the ladies. And good Mrs. Chambers insisted that she should at once go to bed; but Lucille laughingly replied, saying that she was all right, and that she had already nearly recovered from the ill effects of her adventure. The doctor soon made his appearance, and really looked disappointed when he found Miss de Courtney did not need his professional services. But to be sure, he made her go through a gymnastic exercise, to prove that no bones were broken. Then with a grave face he asked her if she did not feel any pain; she might be injured internally. Just then dinner was announced.

“Doctor,” gayly said Miss de Courtney, “come in and dine with us, and I will at least show you that I am still capable of taking my usual allowance of food.”

Of course, during the meal the chief topic of conversation was Miss de Courtney’s adventure. Major Kenyon watched her closely, and noticed that every time mention was made of how she got back to the spring a startled look would come into her face, and she answered all questions by saying she had no recollection on the subject. From her manner Major Kenyon became fully convinced that he was correct in his surmises. He resolved to have at once an interview with Miss de Courtney, tell her his suspicion, and applaud her goodness of heart in trying to shield the man who had saved her life. In doing this he hoped to win her gratitude.

But the excitement of the day was not over. Hardly had the meal been finished when a courier dashed up to the door, inquired for Major Kenyon, and handed him a dispatch. Hastily tearing it open, he glanced at it, gave a groan, and exclaimed:

“Great heavens! Atlanta has fallen!”

“Impossible!” cried Judge Chambers.

“Alas! it is too true,” replied the courier. “For aught I know, Sherman’s cannon may be thundering by this time before Macon.”

Consternation was depicted in every countenance.

“Oh, God! oh, God!” groaned the judge, as he strode up and down the veranda like a maniac; “the Confederacy is doomed, doomed!”

“Not so bad as that,” cried Major Kenyon, with compressed lips. “Atlanta has fallen, but the army still survives. The hope of the South is in the strong arms and brave hearts of her sons; they will never surrender.”

The man really looked inspired as he uttered these words. For the first time Miss de Courtney looked upon him with kindly eyes.

Giving him her hand, she said: “Major Kenyon, I thank you for your words of encouragement. The South can never be conquered as long as it is defended by soldiers like you.”

The major’s heart gave a great bound. Now was his time. “Miss de Courtney,” he answered, bowing, “your words are too gracious when applied to me alone; they belong to the whole army. This dispatch summons me to Macon; the order is imperative; but before I go, will you not grant me a private interview? I have much that I would say to you.”

Miss de Courtney hesitated, paled, and then simply said: “Yes, Major; it is your due.”

No sooner were they alone than Major Kenyon attempted to take her hand, but she drew it back, and said: “You will please be seated; I will then hear what you have to say.”

The major’s brow darkened. “Miss de Courtney, Lucille—may I not call you Lucille?” he exclaimed, passionately; “why do you act so coldly? Why do you treat me as a mere acquaintance? Is it possible you have ceased to love me? Have you

forgotten those old days? I have not forgotten them. The love that I professed years ago, when you were a mere child, has grown stronger with the flight of time. It has been my inspiration, my very life, through all the scenes of danger I have passed. Lucille, are we not as good as engaged? Will you now cast me off, a heartbroken and desperate man?"

Miss de Courtney had listened to Major Kenyon with downcast eyes, and was visibly agitated. She now raised her pure face, and looking at him steadily, said: "Major Kenyon, if by a single act of mine I have caused you pain, I sincerely ask your pardon. It is true that when I was a mere child you asked my hand in marriage. I was flattered by your attention. You were a man of the world, rich, handsome, and much sought after. In my foolish heart I thought I loved you, and told you so; but I told you I should be guided by my father's wishes. He absolutely forbade an engagement, or anything that would savor of a promise, but said that when I was of sufficient age, when the war was over, if we were both still of the same mind, he would not object. We both acquiesced in the decision. There was no promise, nothing binding between us. My letters for the past two years must have told you that even if I ever loved you, I had ceased to do so. I could not write to you and tell you that I wished to break our engagement, for no engagement ever existed. Major Kenyon, I admire you as a brave soldier, but I can never be

your wife. We are too different; the marriage would make us both unhappy. Let us be friends; we can never be anything more."

Never did Lucille de Courtney look more beautiful than when she said this. Major Kenyon gazed, saw what he was about to lose, and love struggled against every evil passion of his nature for mastery. Controlling himself by a powerful effort, he said in a faltering voice: "Lucille, is it thus you cast me off, without one thought of the great love I bear you? Is it possible some one has come between us?"

"There is no one," she answered.

"Then there may be hope?" he replied, eagerly.

"Do not deceive yourself, Major Kenyon. My answer is final."

He saw that he must play his last card, and that it must be played adroitly. "Lucille," he exclaimed, his voice quivering with pathos, "you were near death this evening."

"Yes," she whispered, shuddering.

"And you have no recollection how you were saved, how you came by the little spring?"

"None!" She scarcely breathed the word, so low was it uttered, and she was trembling like a leaf.

"Lucille, your soul is too pure to utter a falsehood. You were unconscious when you were borne to that spring, but some one rescued you, some one carried you to that spring and revived you, and you know who it was, but for some reason you keep it secret."

He paused. Lucille was like a startled hare,

looking in vain for a way to escape. She had arisen, but had to grasp a chair for support. At last she managed to gasp, "What do you mean?"

"Have I not spoken the truth?" he asked in an insinuating tone.

Her spirit came to the rescue. "How dare you question me!" she exclaimed, with flaming face. "Have you sought this interview to insult me?"

"God forbid; I love you too well. I have not only spoken the truth, but I know who rescued you."

"Know—who—rescued—me—" The words came brokenly from her white lips.

"Yes; it was Captain Shackelford, the escaped Yankee prisoner and murderer."

She tottered, and would have fallen, if Major Kenyon had not sprung forward and supported her.

Gently seating her, he continued: "Darling, I have not told you this to distress you, or to upbraid you. Instead, I honor you for what you have done. Escaped prisoner and murderer that he is, your soul shrank from delivering to death the man who saved your life. That he saved you would atone for a dozen murders. Lucille, I hold this man's life in my hands. Recall your cruel words, give back the love that was once mine, and Captain Shackelford shall go free. Lucille, I cannot live without you"; and he stretched forth his arms as if to embrace her.

She made a slight gesture as if to repel him, then pressed her hands to her throbbing temples. He thought he had conquered, and a gleam of tri-

umph spread over his face. She saw it, and with a woman's intuition, read the soul of the man.

"Major Kenyon," she at length said, "I thought you were ordered to Macon."

"So I am, and that is why I plead for an answer before I go."

"How can you protect this Captain Shackelford when you go away? The whole country is looking for him."

"Trust me for that. I will give orders for the men to continue their search on the other side of the river. I believe when I reach Macon I can get permission to return. I hope to see you again inside of two days."

"Go, then, Major; I must think on what you have said. I will give you my answer when you return."

"But the Yankee may be gone."

"If there is any Yankee, as you suppose, he may be gone now."

"Curse this order!" exclaimed the major, losing control of himself. "Why should it come just now? Lucille, I shall give orders to have the country so thoroughly guarded that if Shackelford attempts to leave his hiding-place he will surely be captured. His only safety will be to remain where he is"; and he gave her a look as much as to say, "Keep him where he is, if you wish to save his life." Then he added in gentler tones: "Good night, Lucille; I must be in Macon by morning, but I hope to return in a couple of days, and may your answer make me

the happiest man in Georgia"; and he took her unresisting hand and kissed it, but her face was cold and expressionless.

Major Kenyon found the judge surrounded by an excited group of neighbors discussing the fall of Atlanta. They were all much depressed by the news, and many predicted that the end was near.

"The end will come when the South is free, or when we are all dead," said the major, as he mounted his horse. "You little know the army; they will never surrender."

"How about the escaped prisoner?" asked an officer of the State troops.

"Continue the search across the river, but see that every road is picketed. I shall try to be back in a couple of days"; and with these words he galloped away.

After Major Kenyon had left her Miss de Courteney sat for some time in a profound reverie. What was this Yankee captain to her? She would not betray him, but why try to shield him? Why had she not taunted Major Kenyon with his baseness, and bidden him do his duty as a soldier and arrest this escaped prisoner? Was it not in the faint hope that in some manner she might save her rescuer? She recalled Fred as he stood before her. How handsome and noble he looked, even in his rags. His words as he said, "Go, place the halter around my neck, if you will, but remember you deliver to death one who has saved your life," came to her with startling distinctness. She looked at her

hand—not the one Major Kenyon had kissed, but the one Fred had; the thrill of that kiss seemed to linger.

“I must, I will save him!” she cried; and springing up she sought her faithful groom, Cato.

“Cato, I can trust you, can’t I?”

“Why missy ask old Cato dat?” he asked, with a grieved expression.

“I know I can, Cato; forgive me for asking.” She told him all that had happened, and added: “If they catch this Yankee, they will hang him. I want to save him; will you take a letter to him?”

“De Lawd bress him,” cried the negro, “fo’ savin’ my sweet missy’s life. Ole Cato carry de lettah.”

Miss de Courtney sat down and wrote a short note. Giving it to Cato, she said: “When he left me he went up the river from the little spring. I think you will find him hiding in the woods. Be careful, or he may shoot you. Better call his name, softly; it’s Shackelford — Captain Shackelford. Can you remember it?”

“Yes, missy; trust ole Cato.” And taking the letter, he silently stole out of the house and was speeding through the darkness to carry his errand.

No sooner was Cato gone than Miss de Courtney repented of what she had done. “Oh! why did I do it, why did I do it?” she sobbed, wringing her hands; “but I couldn’t see him hanged.” And she waited in feverish expectancy for Cato’s return.

When Fred left Miss de Courtney he felt he had done something that greatly imperiled the safety of himself and companions. He had no fear that Miss de Courtney would betray him, if she could possibly help it. But how could she explain what had happened to her? He would have watched and seen what took place, but he knew that Darling and Smith would be greatly alarmed, so he hastened to them. If he had waited and seen Major Kenyon examining the ground, he would have carried Smith to another hiding-place. As it was, he resolved to remain where they were. Then, if the truth must be told, he hungered for another sight of the beautiful girl he had rescued.

He met Darling coming to seek him. He had heard the pistol-shot, and watched in an agony of apprehension until he could wait no longer. Fred explained what had happened, and said, "Dick, I don't know but I did a foolish thing, but I couldn't see her drown."

"Captain, I don't blame you a bit. What! see a woman drown, and not raise a hand to help her? Captain, I would have been ashamed of you if you had. Was she beautiful?"

"Dick, she was the most lovely creature I ever saw. I—I—oh, I am a fool, Dick."

"No, not that; but she may betray us, Captain."

"She would die first," cried Fred with vehemence; "but she despises me; she thinks I am a murderer; she told me as much."

“Had we not better move?”

Fred looked at Smith. He now lay as helpless as a child. “Dick, it would be cruel to him; I will risk the danger if you will.”

“I am with you, Captain.”

So it was settled they should stay where they were. It was now dark; Fred told Darling to try and get some sleep, that he would watch over Smith and stand guard.

It was about nine o'clock when Fred's quick ear caught the sound of some one making his way stealthily through the bushes. His revolver was in his hand in a moment, and he listened breathlessly. He was amazed to hear a low voice call, “Massa Shackelford, Massa Shackelford!”

It was a negro's voice, and he knew that its owner meant no harm. “Who are you,” asked Fred, “and what do you want?”

“Ole Cato,” the voice answered. “Ar' yo' Captain Shackelford?”

“Yes.”

“Missy Lucille sent a lettah to yo'.”

Fred's heart gave a great bound when he heard this. “Bring it to me, Cato, quick!”

Cato cautiously advanced and delivered the letter to Fred, who went back, and scraping away the ashes which covered the top of the fire which they kept in a hole they had dug, he held the paper close to the coals, and read:

THE PINES, September 3, 1864.

CAPTAIN SHACKELFORD:

Although you are a Yankee, and an enemy of my country, you saved my life, and I feel grateful to you. Fly, fly! Major Kenyon was here; he had to go to Macon this evening. But he suspects who rescued me; he noticed your tracks. He said he would return in a couple of days. Fly, before he comes back, not only for your sake, but my own. I dare not tell you more.

It may be news to you that Atlanta has fallen; the whole country is in a panic.

LUCILLE DE COURTNEY.

Atlanta fallen! Fred told the glad tidings to Darling, and they hugged each other like two school-girls. Then the glad news was whispered to Smith. It aroused the scout from his lethargy.

“Now,” he exclaimed, “I can die in peace. The good Lord He let me live long enough to hear this. Tell the ole ’oman back in Kentuck it’s all right.”

Fred had no writing material on which to pen a reply, so he said: “Cato, can you remember what I tell you to tell to your mistress?”

“Yes, massa; ole Cato ’member ebbery word.”

“Tell her, then, that Captain Shackelford thanks her from the bottom of his heart for her kindness; but he is watching by the side of a dying comrade, an old man, and he cannot leave him until his eyes are closed in death, even to save his own life. Can you remember that?”

“Yes, massa, ebbery word”; and the old negro repeated the message.

“That will do, Cato; now go.”

“Will he be true?” asked Darling, a little nervously, after the negro had departed.

“Yes, as true as Joe was; there is nothing to fear from him.”

All through the night Fred watched by the side of Smith. Darling wanted to relieve him, but he refused, saying that he could not sleep. This was true, for his thoughts were all of Lucille de Courtney. “Major Kenyon her acquaintance, perhaps a lover!” A bitter pang of jealousy cut him like a knife at the thought. What did she mean when she said she did not dare to tell him more, but to fly for her sake? And thus Fred questioned himself, and to all his questions he could not give a satisfactory answer.

Cato took his message back to Miss de Courtney. Its import terrified her. He would not go, he would not leave a dying comrade.

That night in her dreams Miss de Courtney was once more riding to her death; once more she was saved by the ragged Yankee prisoner. Then her dream changed, and she saw Fred in the hands of his enemies. A rope was around his neck, a raging mob was around him. Major Kenyon stood by and mocked her as she pleaded for his life. With a shriek she awoke, trembling from head to foot. There was no more sleep for her that night, and she lay awake, thinking, thinking, and scolding herself for her folly.

But the dream made such a strong impression

on her mind that she determined to see her rescuer in person and urge upon him the necessity of flight. She came down to the breakfast-table, listless, nervous, and with dark circles beneath her eyes.

"My dear," said her aunt, "you look sick; the dreadful experience of yesterday was too much for you. No wonder! You must keep your room to-day."

"No," replied Miss de Courtney; "nothing will do me so much good as a swift canter. It will stir my blood and cure my nervousness."

"What," cried Mrs. Chambers, "a horseback ride after what happened yesterday! Lucille, are you crazy?"

"I will take a gentle horse, and Cato shall ride by my side for protection. Please let me go, aunt; nothing will do me so much good. I shall come back feeling like a new person."

So it was agreed that she might take a gallop with Cato as groom. She rode straight to the little spring, and with a blush told Cato to hunt up the Yankee captain; she wished to see him.

Cato had not far to look, for Fred had been at the spring, noting every track, and, we are afraid, acting very foolishly. His heart gave a great leap when he saw Miss de Courtney approaching. He hastily beat a retreat, but stationed himself where he could catch a view of the beautiful face he so longed to see.

With a palpitating heart he obeyed her summons. "This is kind of you, Miss de Courtney,"

he began, but stopped. There was something in her look he did not understand. The fact was, Miss de Courtney was angry at herself, angry because she had come, but nothing would have prevented her from coming.

“Mr.—Mr.—” she began, then hesitated.

“Shackelford,” suggested Fred.

“Mr. Shackelford, I have come again to urge you to flee. You are in the gravest peril. Cato will see to your sick comrade, and give him decent burial. I—I—honor you for your devotion to your comrade, but I cannot bear to be the cause of your death. Major Kenyon may be back at any time. Fly, while you can.”

“Miss de Courtney, you will not be the cause of my death, if death comes. You have done your full duty. I do not deserve your kindness. I am an enemy to your country, an escaped prisoner with a price on my head. But do not ask me to leave my old comrade. He once saved my life; he has borne me in his arms when wounded. I confess life is sweet to me since I saw you, but do not ask me to save it by deserting a comrade who never deserted me.”

“Oh, I cannot have your blood upon my head!” she moaned.

“You will not; you have dared everything to save me.”

“But I shall,” she cried, excitedly. “You don’t understand. I could save you, but oh! I can’t. Major Kenyon—” She stopped.

“Miss de Courtney, what do you mean? What of Major Kenyon?”

“Oh, nothing, nothing.” Then, as if to change the subject, she suddenly asked, “Is it true that you are a son of General Richard Shackelford of our army?”



GENERAL HARDEE.

“It is true.”

“The country is ringing with his praises. He it was who checked the Federal charge at Jonesboro and saved Hardee’s corps. How can you, with such a father, fight against the South? I hate you—I hate you. You are a traitor not only to the South, but to your father.”

“Miss de Courtney,” Fred cried, “I love the South, but I love the Union better. The South is wrong.”

“I will not hear you; you claim to love the South, yet trample on her dearest rights. What is your flag but a rag of coercion and oppression?”

“I was wrong to differ with you,” replied Fred, humbly. “I am an enemy to your country; why not deliver me over to those seeking me?”

“I will not betray you,” she cried, hotly. “But why torture me. Go, go!”

“Torture you, Miss de Courtney? God forbid! I could die for you.”

No woman could misconstrue the look in Fred’s

eyes. She blushed scarlet, and then said, gently: "Captain Shackelford, you are a brave man. When a man with a halter dangling before his face refuses to desert a sick comrade, he can be trusted. I will do what I can to save you."

"If ever angel trod the earth, you are one," exclaimed Fred; and he made a motion as to take her hand.

But she drew it gently back, and saying "Farewell!" she wheeled her horse and rode swiftly away. Fred gazed after her with longing eyes, but she did not look back.

CHAPTER XIX.

LOVE VERSUS HONOR.

WHEN Lucille de Courtney returned from her interview with Fred, she at once sought the retirement of her room, telling her aunt the ride had done her good, but that she felt somewhat fatigued. Her mind was in a tumult. She knew she had done something that would bring upon her the severest condemnation, if known. She tried to persuade herself that it was only gratitude that prompted her to seek the interview with her preserver, and urge him to flee. But she was conscious of a stronger feeling than gratitude, a feeling that she dared not and would not analyze. She only knew that the safety of Captain Shackelford was the absorbing passion of her heart. For it she was willing to face the anger, even the scorn, of those she held dear.

She spent a miserable day, alternately bewailing her folly and then wondering whether Captain Shackelford would really court death rather than desert his sick comrade. She prayed that he would go, so that she might be relieved of the fearful responsibility resting upon her; yet in her heart she hoped that he would not go—she would be disappointed in him if he did.

“If he loved me as Major Kenyon professes to,” she said to herself, “I do not believe he would swerve one iota from what he considers to be his duty. I do not believe he would leave his sick comrade if I begged him on my knees to do so—and oh! I honor him for it.”

Then like a flash came the recollection that Major Kenyon had compromised his duty as a soldier in hopes of winning her; that he had coolly proposed to let Shackelford go, the very man that he was commissioned to catch, if she would promise to marry him.

“For his passion for me,” she said, “he has proved false to his vows as a soldier; if a stronger passion than his love for me should ever possess him, he would be false to me.”

Then a thought, a terrible thought, took possession of her. Would she not be as false as Major Kenyon if she married him as a loveless wife, even to save the life of one she did love?

“If Captain Shackelford were in Major Kenyon’s place,” she said to herself, “if he loved me better than life itself, he would never compromise his honor to win me, and he would despise me for saving his life by taking upon myself false vows.”

And she was right. There are in this world many things worse than death, among them the loss of self-respect and honor.

Filled with this thought, her mind was fully made up. Not for a moment would she think of

marrying Major Kenyon. And with this determination came an abiding hope that in some manner Captain Shackelford would baffle his enemies and escape, and the thought gave her great happiness.

When night came she had Cato carry some food to the fugitives, and with it a canteen of hot soup for Smith. She listened eagerly to what Cato had to say when he returned, and her eyes glistened when he told how Fred refused to drink the soup when he found that Smith could not. And every word of the message that Fred sent by the old negro was treasured in her heart.

“Ole Yankee mighty sick,” said Cato; “dead befo’ mornin’.” Then they would be gone by morning, and Kenyon would be cheated of his prey. She fervently prayed that such might be the case, and yet the thought that she might never see Captain Shackelford again caused her deeper pain than she would confess.

She told Cato to pretend to go fishing early in the morning, and see if the Yankees had gone. “Tell them,” said she, “if they have not gone, that Major Kenyon will surely be back some time during the day, and that I can do nothing more.”

All through the night she lay in an agony of fear; every sound caused her to start, thinking it might be the major returning.

She was up early, walking in the garden, eagerly waiting the return of Cato, when she was startled by the sound of horses’ feet, and Major Kenyon,

accompanied by several soldiers, galloped up. The major caught sight of her, and throwing the bridle of his horse to one of the soldiers, at once joined her.

“Good morning, Lucille,” he exclaimed. “This is indeed a pleasure for which I am truly thankful. Will you not gather me a bouquet?”

She gathered a handful of flowers and handed them to him, but without a word. He took them eagerly, raised them to his lips, saying: “And is this all of your greeting, Lucille? Can you not, will you not recall the cruel words that you uttered when I went away? Tell me it was all a mistake, that you are the same little girl who loved me in Columbia.”

“Major Kenyon,” answered Lucille, “if I promised to marry you, I should be guilty of deception and cruelty, for I do not love you. I have considered well what you said, and I can never marry you. I have asked you to be my friend; if you persist in being a lover, we must part.”

“Lucille,” exclaimed Major Kenyon, choking with mortification and anger, “is that your final decision?”

“Final and irrevocable.”

“Then, by heavens! you shall have the satisfaction of seeing the man who saved your life hanged before night. He can’t be far off, for I have had every avenue of escape carefully guarded”; and he turned to go.

“Stop!” The command was so imperative that

he halted instantly. "Is it your duty as a soldier to capture this man?" she asked.

"It is; you know it."

"Then for the sake of my hand in a loveless marriage you would prove false to your country, false to your honor as a soldier. Know that I would have honored you more, trusted you more, if you had held your honor above my love. No soldier who forgets honor is worthy the love of a true woman. Go! I despise you."

While she was speaking, Major Kenyon stood as if rooted to the ground, stood as if deprived of the power of speech, staring at her in dumb amazement.

Recovering from his surprise, he answered, with biting sarcasm: "I thank you, Miss de Courtney, for pointing out to me my duty—a duty which I forgot through the wiles of a designing woman. Before night you shall have the supreme satisfaction of seeing Captain Shackelford dangling at the end of a rope, and as he hangs I shall whisper in his ear it was you who betrayed him. I shall also take care that all shall know who saved your life, and how you repaid your preserver. Good morning, Miss de Courtney."

With these words he turned, with a mocking smile upon his cruel lips, and swiftly left her.

She heard him ordering his men to mount, and knew what it meant. A sudden resolution seized her. She knew not, cared not, what the result would be to her. She rushed to the barn.

“Saddle me the swiftest horse,” she cried.
“Quick! quick!”

In a moment more she was riding as for life toward the place where she knew Captain Shackelford was.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DEATH OF SMITH.

WHEN Lucille de Courtney left Fred, he watched her with eager eyes until out of sight; then with a sigh he sought his comrades. Miss de Courtney had moved his heart in a way that he did not understand, stirred it deeper than he would have been willing to acknowledge.

On his return he found Darling very uneasy over his prolonged absence.

“Captain,” he asked, “did I not hear the sound of horses’ feet?”

“Yes,” answered Fred, shortly.

“Did you see who it was?”

“Yes.”

“Captain, what is the matter with you? You do not seem yourself. Is there danger? If so, why not tell me?”

“Dick, forgive me; I am not myself. It was Miss de Courtney, the girl I saved from drowning yesterday. She came to urge us to fly. Major Kenyon may be back at any time, and she says the hunt for us will be prosecuted with tenfold vigor.”

Darling gave a low whistle. “Captain,” he

exclaimed, "that girl is taking a great interest in you. I am afraid you will be captured, if I am not."

"Dick, that girl is an angel."

"So every fellow thinks about some girl sooner or later. I thought so once. That's what sent me roaming out West. My angel proved very earthly."

"I am sorry, Dick; you must tell me all about it some time. But you should see Miss de Courtney. I have always thought Mabel Vaughn and my cousin Kate the most beautiful girls I ever saw, but they are nowhere compared to Miss de Courtney."

"Captain, does the fair being reciprocate?"

Fred's countenance fell. "I—I don't know," he stammered. Darling looked at him quizzically for a moment, and then burst out laughing.

"What are you laughing at, Dick?" asked Fred, a little nettled.

"At your appearance, Captain. If that girl takes to you now, I cannot commend her taste. Clothed in rags and covered with mud. Face covered with a beautiful reddish fuzz. Oh, Captain, you should see yourself!"

"No need of that; I have only to look at you," replied Fred, rather bitterly. "But, Dick, no more of this; it makes me sick to think of my appearance. You stand guard while I watch over poor Smith. Dick, the end cannot be far away; we have taken the last scout together."

Darling did not answer, his heart was too sore.

Throughout the whole day Fred watched by the side of the dying man. Smith lay most of the time in a quiet slumber; but once or twice when Fred addressed him in endearing terms, he opened his eyes and smiled. Once he took Fred's hand and held it for a long time. He seemed to suffer no pain, but lay like a child peacefully slumbering.

Night brought Cato. He reported all quiet; that Major Kenyon had not returned, that most of the men who were looking for them were still searching across the river. He brought them some more food, and with it a canteen of nourishing soup for Smith.

"Tell your mistress," said Fred, with a tremor in his voice, "if the prayers of an enemy can avail, she will never meet with misfortune."

But Smith was past eating. Fred handed back the canteen to Cato, with a sigh. "Take it, Cato," he said; "he don't need it; but God bless your mistress for sending it."

With the night there came a storm. Smith wandered in his mind. To him the crash of thunder was the roar of artillery. "The battle is on," he cried; "Captain, whar air yo'?"

"Here, Smith, here," said Fred, taking his hand; "right by your side."

"Captain, heah that," he cried, as a heavier peal than usual shook the earth. "Sherman is giving it to them."

"Yes, Smith; Sherman has Atlanta."

"Sherman has Atlanta!" cried the old man, in

a voice that sounded almost natural. "I knowed it; I knowed he would take it."

At last the storm passed away, and the stars came out, but to those lonely watchers in the woods there seemed to be no star of hope. The blackness and fury of the storm suited their condition better.

After the storm Smith did not quiet down, but talked to himself incessantly. Once more he was riding with Fred on the scout. Then he and Darling were rescuing Fred from the hands of Forrest.

"Thar, Captain," he said, soothingly, "put yo' arms 'round Smith's neck; thar, that will do. Don't worry; I will carry you. I will git yo' to Nashville in time."

Then he cried, excitedly: "Great God! he is goin' to shoot the captain"; and in his delirium he again killed Conway, and saved Fred's life.

"Dick, Dick," said Fred, brokenly, "I can't stand it. Dying he thinks of me." And going away a short distance, Fred threw himself on the ground and gave way to a passion of grief.

At last the long, long night passed away. Just as the sun was rising Smith opened his eyes, and they no longer gleamed with the delirium of fever.

"Captain," he whispered, "ole Smith is goin'. Whar is Dick?"

"On guard."

"Call him."

Dick was called.

"Good-bye, Captain; good-bye, Dick," he

faintly whispered. "Don't cry, boys, don't cry; it don't matter. It's only John Smith."

Then he motioned for them to bend closer. "Tell Sally—yo' know she lives in Elizabethtown—an' the gals, Mary an' Lucy, that ole Smith never disgraced them, or—or—old Kentuck," and he was gone.

"No truer heart ever beat," said Fred, as with gentle hand he closed the sightless eyes and folded the pulseless hands across his breast.

Just then a ray of sunlight straggled down through the pine-boughs and rested on the head of the dead, causing the gray locks to be crowned with an aureole of light.

"See! see!" said Fred, pointing at it; "the sun is using one of his brightest beams to paint a halo such as the old masters place around the heads of their saints."

"And more worthy it is to be so crowned than many that have been," reverently said Darling.

What disposition to make of the body was settled by Cato, who appeared with a fishing-rod over his shoulder, also with a basket of food.

"Cato," they eagerly asked, "can you get us a spade?"

"Yes, massa; Cato tell dem he wants it to dig bait."

"Then hurry."

Throwing down his fishing-rod, the negro at once started on his errand.

But Fred and Darling fell to with their ax, the

one cutting up the earth and the other scooping it out with his hands, and by the time Cato returned they had the grave nearly completed. The negro was breathless with running, and was greatly excited. As soon as he could speak he gasped:

“Oh, Massa Captain! Major Kenyon he back; was talkin’ wid Missy Lucille in garden. He be after yo’, suah.”

So Fred thought. Quickly lining the grave with bark, they placed all that was mortal of their late comrade in his narrow bed; then covering the body with more bark, they quickly shoveled back the earth, and their task of love was completed.

But hardly was it done when Cato called out: “Massa, massa! da cumin’,” and disappeared like a flash in the woods.

Looking, they saw Miss de Courtney galloping furiously toward them, and wildly motioning to them to run. A short distance in the rear of Miss de Courtney was Major Kenyon, urging his horse to his utmost speed, while still in the rear of him was Judge Chambers with several other horsemen.

“Run, Dick, run for the river!” cried Fred. “I must speak to Miss de Courtney before I go.”

“For God’s sake, Captain, come!” shouted Darling. “A moment’s delay will be fatal, but not a foot will I stir until you come.”

Swift as the wind, urging her steed with caress and word, came Miss de Courtney. Her hat was gone, her long brown hair flying in the breeze, her face flaming with excitement.

Reining in her horse, she cried: "Run, run! Major Kenyon will be here in a moment. He will show no mercy."

Springing to her side, Fred seized her unresisting hand. "If I go, will it leave you in danger? If so, I will never leave you."

"No! No! Go!"

"Then farewell! May God bless you! Forgive me, but I love you—love you with a love past understanding." And pressing her hand to his lips, he was gone.

But not before Major Kenyon was on them. He raised his revolver to fire, but Miss de Courtney struck his horse with her riding-whip; the horse sprang, disconcerted his aim, and his shot went wild.

"Traitor!" he shrieked, "that Yankee lover of yours shall not escape"; but before he could quiet his horse, steed and rider went rolling on the ground.

Fred had turned, but unwilling to take human life in the presence of Miss de Courtney, he had fired at Major Kenyon's horse, hitting him squarely in the forehead.

"Now, Dick," he shouted, "for the river! We must run for it.

Extricating himself from his fallen horse, Major Kenyon struggled to his feet. Forgetting himself in his rage, he cursed Miss de Courtney as a traitress, and called down all manner of maledictions on the head of Captain Shackelford. Before, his hatred of Fred was caused by wounded vanity, but



MISS DE COURTNEY STRUCK HIS HORSE, AND HIS SHOT
WENT WILD.

now he was filled with a jealous rage which made a demon of him.

By this time Judge Chambers and half a dozen men were on the scene. They stared in amazement at the dead horse, the new-made grave, the furious major, and then at Miss de Courtney, who sat on her horse as motionless and white as a piece of sculptured marble.

“What—what does this mean?” shouted the judge. “Major Kenyon, I shall hold you accountable for using such language in the presence of my niece.”

“Judge Chambers, you do not understand,” excitedly exclaimed the major. “Your niece is a traitress. She has been hiding and abetting the murderer of Lieutenant Brown. She struck my horse and disconcerted my aim, else I would have shot him dead in his tracks. She did this to save the life of her Yankee lover.”

“Lover! lover!” thundered Judge Chambers. “Beware, Major Kenyon, what charges you bring. Lucille, explain.”

Then all that was noble and true in the soul of Lucille de Courtney shone forth. The men cast threatening glances on her, but she did not heed them. Drawing herself up in the saddle, her face pale, but her eyes shining like two stars, she said, proudly, defiantly:

“Uncle Chambers, it is true I shielded this captain, knowing he was an escaped Federal prisoner, also that he was accused of slaying Lieuten-

ant Brown. Regardless of the fact that he was hunted like the most desperate felon, that there was a price on his head, he risked all, and saved my life. He it was who shot my horse just as he was to plunge into the river. He it was who snatched me from the crumbling bank and bore me back unconscious to the little spring, and there revived me. Could I betray the man who had saved my life? Are ye men, to ask me? I shielded him; I glory in it. I implored him to flee. He refused, for an old comrade was dying. There is his grave. Rather than leave his comrade while alive, this young Federal captain again risked capture and an ignominious death. I honor him for it. It was to watch by the side of his dying comrade that, notwithstanding my prayers, he has remained so long in the neighborhood. I rode here this morning to warn him. I struck Major Kenyon's horse so as to disconcert the major's aim. I am glad I did it. Do with me as you like."

She stopped. The fire died out of her eyes. A faintness seized her, and she reeled and nearly fell from her saddle. Recovering herself, she sat like a drooping lily.

Her burning eloquence, for eloquence it was, carried away the excitable men who heard it. They were true sons of the South, of all men the most gallant to women.

"Hurrah for Miss de Courtney!" shouted a young officer, swinging his hat; and the cheers were given with a will.

But Judge Chambers was astounded at Lucille's confession. "Go home," he said, not unkindly; "we will settle this later."

The girl wheeled her horse and rode slowly away.

Just then one of the party cried, "See, the Yankees have swum the river."

Sure enough, Fred and Darling were seen to emerge from the river and disappear into the woods.

"They must not escape," shouted the judge; "the honor of my house forbids. Men, do not let the whim of a foolish, romantic girl stand between us and our duty. I cannot blame the girl much, but we are men. Major Kenyon, do your full duty; see they do not escape."

"I thank you, Judge," replied the major. "I knew you would not blame me when you understood. Men," he continued to those around him, "you have just seen the murderers of Lieutenant Brown disappear in the woods across the river. I have already offered a reward of ten thousand dollars for them, dead or alive; I now double it. Let the whole country be aroused; make escape impossible."

In a moment Lucille de Courtney was forgotten. The men were once more savages, keen on the trail of their enemies, thirsting for blood.

Major Kenyon with half a dozen men, accompanied by Judge Chambers's overseer with a pack of bloodhounds, crossed the river to take up the trail where Fred and Darling were seen to enter the

wood. Swift riders were sent to arouse the whole country, and to call in the men who were seeking for the escaped Yankees elsewhere, and by noon full five hundred men were searching both banks of the river.

As for Fred and Darling, they knew that nothing would be left undone to capture them, that the whole country would be at their heels as merciless as a pack of wolves. Once out of the water, they shook themselves like dogs, to free their clothing from as much water as possible, and then broke into a run.

Darling had preserved his precious ax, while Fred had swum the river holding his revolver and cartridge belt up in one hand, thus keeping them from getting wet. They took a northerly course, and ran for about three miles, when they suddenly came upon the river, there being a bend in it to the west.

Both were badly winded, and they felt they could not keep up their tremendous pace much longer. They stopped, panting, and listening like stags at bay; already the faint cry of dogs could be heard in the distance.

“We would better swim back across the river,” panted Fred; “it will at least throw the dogs off the scent.”

“Better stay while we have strength, and fight and die like men,” answered Darling. “I see no possible way of escaping.”

‘If die we must, we can die in one place as well

as in another. Let us die trying; all hope is not gone."

"Enough, Captain; lead on."

"Hold a moment," said Fred; and wading down the edge of the stream a short distance to where the woods grew thick to the river's edge and the branches of a tree drooped into the water, he broke off several of the limbs, and even went so far as to clamber into the tree.

"Now, Dick," he exclaimed, as he dropped back into the river; and both were soon breasting the current.

It being swift, they were carried down-stream some distance. Just before reaching the opposite bank, Fred noticed that a large tree had been partly undermined by the water, and had half fallen over, a portion of its roots being in and washed by the stream. When Fred saw it, a great hope filled his heart. Would it not make a safe retreat?

"Dick," he said, "let us make for that tree."

Swimming up to it, they parted the clinging roots, and saw that there was quite a large cavity under the tree.

"Dick," said Fred, joyously, "I believe it will save us, but we must dive for it."

This they did, and came up under the tree. Working their way back, they found a place where they could rest above the water, and so dark that they would not be discovered, even if one parted the roots and peered in.

"If we are discovered," said Fred, "we shall be

caught like rats in a hole; but one thing is sure, the dogs cannot track us here. Dick, I believe we are safe."

"I believe so, too, Captain. I had about given up hope; I shall never lose faith again until the very last."

Soon they heard the barking of the dogs, and shouts and calls of their pursuers. At the river the trail was lost.

"The wretches must have swum back across the river," said the major, angrily.

"Look at that tree which hangs over the water," cried one of the men; "its branches are freshly broken; it looks as if some one had climbed into it in a hurry." A rush was made for the tree.

"A Yankee trick to throw the dogs off the scent," cried the major. "They could pass from one tree to another for a little distance. Look for the trail farther back."

But all search proved fruitless. The dogs ran round and round, but the trail was completely lost.

"They might be hiding among the thick foliage of some of the trees," remarked another.

A careful survey gave no signs of the fugitives.

"Those broken branches were nothing but a blind," at length exclaimed the major, with an oath. "Like fools, we have swallowed their bait. They swam back across the river, and by this time are three or four miles away. Fools! fools! that we are."

“There is a ford half a mile above,” shouted one of the men; and with oaths and cries of baffled rage the whole party started for the ford.

Soon hundreds of men were scouring both sides of the river, but no trace of the trail could be found. If the earth had opened and swallowed Fred and Darling, their disappearance could not have been more complete. Although baffled at every point, the search was kept up until dark, when, weary and furious, the pursuers sought their homes, leaving guards to watch every road.

At the earnest invitation of Judge Chambers, Major Kenyon accompanied him home. The major, like a great many other men, never valued a thing so much as after he had lost it. He never loved Lucille de Courtney so much as when she seemed lost to him forever. He now looked on Judge Chambers as a valuable ally, and hoped that a pressure might be brought on Miss de Courtney which would induce her to change her mind. For this reason Major Kenyon readily accepted the judge's invitation.

On their way they earnestly discussed the mystery of the Yankees' sudden disappearance.

“Major,” suddenly said the judge, “I believe I have solved the problem. Both of those fellows are at the bottom of the Flint.”

The major started. “What makes you think so?” he eagerly asked.

“The trail led plainly to the river. They must have been exhausted with running; they heard the

dogs, and attempted to swim back, but their strength gave out, and they sank."

"I believe you are right," at length responded the major; "there is no other reasonable solution to this sudden disappearance."

So it was given out that the Yankees were drowned, to the great satisfaction of a large number of the pursuers who had gathered at Judge Chambers's. The judge ordered supper for all, and then he and Major Kenyon repaired to the library for a private conference.

The judge was greatly scandalized by what had happened. That one of his own household should have known of the presence, and then aided in the escape of a Federal prisoner who had gone so far as to kill an officer attempting to arrest him, filled him with indignation. What would his neighbors think? How would it affect his standing in the community? The judge was ill at ease.

"Major Kenyon," he said, "I can freely forgive you for what occurred this morning. Under the circumstances it is no wonder you lost control of yourself; but you said one thing that needs explanation. You accused this Yankee captain of being Lucille's lover. What did you mean? I have had a vague idea that you and Lucille were engaged, but I must confess she has not treated you like a lover while you have been here."

"Judge," the major replied, in his softest tones, "I will be perfectly frank with you. I love your

niece—wildly, passionately. When she was little more than a child, about three years ago, I asked her to be my wife. She seemed pleased with my proposal, and referred me to her father. Mr. de Courtney demurred solely on account of the extreme youth of Lucille. You know his high sense of honor, that he considers a promise as binding as an oath. So he forbade a positive engagement, but said if Lucille remained of the same mind when she arrived at a suitable age, he would offer no objection. I have always considered Lucille as my affianced wife. I have always loved her as such. Her letters to me have always been models of affection. She wrote me to visit her here, but as a girlish freak requested me to meet her merely as a friend; that she did not wish the young ladies of the neighborhood to know that I was her accepted lover. Imagine my surprise when she told me this morning that there could be nothing between us. I charged her with loving this murdering Yankee captain, and she shamelessly admitted it.”

So skillfully had Major Kenyon interwoven truth and falsehood that Judge Chambers would have been thoroughly convinced of its truth if it had not been for one thing. His judicial mind saw one fatal defect in the story.

“Major Kenyon,” replied the judge, coldly, “one thing you have said needs an explanation. You say that you charged my niece, this morning, with concealing the hiding-place and loving this

Captain Shackelford? How did you know he was in the neighborhood?" and the judge looked at him closely.

For once Major Kenyon was taken back. He turned pale and clutched at his throat as if choking. But it was only for a moment. He arose mightily to the occasion.

"Judge Chambers," he answered, without a tremor, "I am not surprised at your question. I should have explained that before. You remember that Lucille told us she had no remembrance how she came to that little spring after her horse plunged into the river. I noticed that she was startled and frightened when you questioned her on that point."

"Yes, I remember," said the judge. "I then thought the story a little strange."

"I noticed more," continued the major. "There were the fresh footprints of a man around the spring. But it was no time then to accuse a lady of deception. I found the same tracks where her horse went into the river. I intended to lay the whole matter before you, but owing to the news of the fall of Atlanta and my sudden summons to Macon, in the excitement of the moment I forgot to tell you of my suspicions."

"No wonder," said the judge; "it was enough to upset any one."

"In all of that long night's ride to Macon I was tortured with the thought that for some reason Lucille was deceiving us. Suddenly it all flashed on me; the footprints around the spring on the

river bank were made by the same person that murdered Lieutenant Brown. I noticed them closely at the place where poor Brown was killed. They were small for a man and made by a fine boot. Then it was all plain to me. Her rescuer was the Yankee Shackelford. She could not bear to betray the man who had saved her life, and so she deceived us. I could not condemn her under the circumstances, but it was my duty to capture him. So I obtained another leave of absence, and returned, but little expected to find him still lingering in the neighborhood. When I arrived this morning I saw Lucille in the garden, and sought an interview with her. She received me coldly, and coolly informed me all was over between us. I was thunderstruck. I pleaded with her, but to all of my pleadings she turned a deaf ear. I begged for a reason for her refusal, but she haughtily declined to give any. Half-crazed by her conduct and stung to desperation, I boldly charged her with her deception, and declared my belief that she loved this Yankee desperado. To my surprise she did not deny the charge, but boldly confessed her love for Captain Shackelford. 'Whom I will hang before night,' I cried, beside myself with rage and wounded love.

“It was a chance shot, for I fully expected the fellow had gone; but she gave a little cry, and I thought she was going to faint. I then knew the fellow still lingered in the neighborhood, and I at once rushed to my men to give orders for his cap-

ture. She divined my intentions, and you know the result.”

“Great heavens!” ejaculated Judge Chambers, bringing down his fist with a thump on the table; “and my niece, an inmate of my house, has done this. I am disgraced, ruined, and it will break her father’s heart. Major Kenyon, too much of this is already known. Say no more of what you have told me. Let the disgraceful story go no further, if possible.”

“Judge, you may depend upon my silence. I shall respect your and your family’s feelings in this.”

“Thank you, Major; I knew you would. Now go. I must see Lucille at once.”

“Judge,” said the crafty liar, as he arose, “deal gently with her. Remember her youth. Fortunately this Yankee captain, as we believe, lies at the bottom of the Flint, so there is no more danger from him. I still love her; I still hope to win her. Once she is my wife much of the disgrace will be removed. Let any one, if he dare, whisper a word against the wife of Major Kenyon.”

“You are too good; she is not worthy of you. But if I have any influence, you shall have her.”

“Ah, my lady!” muttered the major as he went out, “you will yet have to choose between me and disgrace—deep, damning disgrace—before this is ended.”

After Major Kenyon had passed out, Judge Chambers leaned his head on his hands and groaned.

Lucille was very dear to him, almost as dear as a daughter. She was the only child of a dead sister—a sister he had dearly loved—and the blow to him was a severe one.

When Miss de Courtney returned from the exciting scene in which she had warned Fred, she retired to her room completely prostrated, refusing to see any one except the faithful Cato. The news of what she had done created the utmost excitement and consternation in the household. She remained all day in her room, in an agony of fear. Every moment she expected to hear that Captain Shackelford was captured, and if he was, she well knew what his fate would be. Cato was to bring her any news that came. As the hours passed and there were no tidings, she began to hope. At last the long day closed, and the noise outside told her that the pursuers were returning. She heard the slow, heavy step of Cato in the hall, and her heart stood still. After a timid knock, Cato entered. She gave one look at his face and her hopes fled.

“Have they caught him?” she gasped.

“No, missy; but he be drowned.”

“Drowned?” she repeated, clutching at a chair for support.

“Yes, missy; da hunted and hunted and da could git no track of him, so da say he drown.”

“Then they did not find the body?” she cried, her face lighting up.

“No, missy; da track him to de ribber and find nothin’ mo’.”

“Cato, he is not drowned; I know it, feel it. He has outwitted them.”

“Bress de Lawd fo’ dat! Oh, missy, I so glad!”

What Miss de Courtney said was always gospel to Cato.

Soon she received an imperative summons from Judge Chambers to attend him in the library. She obeyed listlessly. As she entered the room the judge still sat with his head bowed resting in his hands. He started at her appearance. Her drooping figure, the lines of agony in her face, her eyes red with weeping, touched his heart. He could not be as severe as he intended.

“Lucille,” he commenced, in an aggrieved tone, “never have I been so wounded as you have wounded me to-day. My child, what made you disgrace yourself and me?”

“Oh, Uncle, Uncle, don’t! I can’t bear it”; and she sank with streaming eyes at his feet. “Uncle,” she sobbed, “send me back to Columbia. You know that father is now expected home, if the vessel he is on has the good fortune to run the blockade.”

“I wish he were here now,” broke in the judge; “you need him. It was a sad thing for you that your mother died when you were young. You might not have disgraced her name.”

Lucille arose, with flashing eyes. “Stop!” she cried; “stop! I will not hear you. And I now demand that you send me to Macon to-morrow. I will not sleep under your roof another night.

Never have I disgraced the name of my sainted mother, and I never will."

The judge was both astonished and angered by the outbreak.

"Have you not broken your engagement with Major Kenyon?" he demanded.

"I never was engaged to him; I—"

"There, stop," broke in the judge, petulantly; "I know the whole story. You never thought of breaking with him until you met this murdering Yankee captain."

"'Tis false; I made up my mind never to marry Major Kenyon long before I ever saw or heard of Captain Shackelford."

"Dare you deny that you love this miserable Yankee?"

For a moment she stood irresolute. Then drawing herself up to her full height, her eyes shining, her bosom rising and falling with suppressed emotion, she proudly replied: "I do love Captain Shackelford. A woman's love is wayward; she only knows she loves."

The judge was astounded at her bold avowal, but managed to say: "Thank God, he is dead!"

"No, no, Uncle, don't say that," she pleaded; "you don't know he is dead."

"Almost certain; the Flint cheated the gallows, that's all, and it's a pity."

"Uncle, why torture me?" she wailed; "why tell me that the man I love is dead, and by his

dying cheated the gallows? I again demand that you send me to Macon to-morrow."

"And you shall go, Lucille. I had rather see you in your grave than have you go forth from my roof under the cloud that now overshadows you. No, don't answer; I have heard enough. Go!"

Lucille de Courtney went out from the presence of her uncle with bowed head and trembling footsteps. Of all that her uncle had said, these words only rang in her ears, "He is dead, thank God!"

Were they true? Alas! she feared they were.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE RECOVERY OF PRINCE.

HUNGRY, wet, and cold, Fred and Darling remained in their retreat until near midnight. They felt it would be death to remain much longer. So benumbed were they, they could scarcely move. They knew that dangers confronted them on every side, but these would have to be met. But where to go, what to do, was the problem they had now to solve.

After earnestly discussing the question, Fred said: "Dick, when we came in here I noticed that two good-sized logs had lodged against the roots of this tree. As there is no moon, the night will be dark. The best thing we can do is to float down the river on them."

"Where shall we float to?" asked Darling.

"Down to our old camping-place. It will be the last place they will look for us. We may also get sight of Cato, and so be able to get something to eat, as well as to learn what is going on."

"And perhaps get sight of the beautiful Miss de Courtney," added Darling, mischievously.

To this Fred made no answer.

Crawling out from under the roots, after a little

effort they succeeded in loosening the logs, and silently floated down the stream. The water proved to be much warmer than the air, and feeling gradually came to their limbs.

"How shall we know when we reach the place?" whispered Darling; "we must be nearly there."

"I think I see the dark outline of the top of the pine under which poor Smith is buried," answered Fred.

Cautiously making their way to the shore, they found the coast clear, and were soon in their old quarters. The night was quite cool, and they had to keep walking to prevent being chilled to the bone. Vigorous exercise soon started their sluggish blood, and the heat of their bodies dried their dripping clothes.

All night long they kept up their ceaseless vigil. The morning light revealed two forlorn-looking individuals. Darling stole down to a cornfield, where he gathered a few ears. So hungry were the fugitives that they ate a couple of ears apiece raw, their fire having gone out and the water having spoiled their remaining matches.

They were discussing the propriety of moving a short distance, as curiosity might prompt some one to come and look at the grave of Smith, when the sound of horsehoofs startled them. Looking up, they saw Miss de Courtney and Cato riding toward the spring. Fred was off like a shot.

Miss de Courtney had come to take a last look at the place where she came so near to death and

where she first met Captain Shackelford. She had almost come to the conclusion that her uncle might be right, and that her lover had perished.

She sat on her horse, looking into the sparkling waters of the river and shuddering when she thought of what they might hold in their embrace, when the approaching footsteps of Fred startled her. When she saw him, she screamed and looked as white as though she had seen a ghost, then cried, joyfully:

“Oh! they told me you were drowned.”

“Not drowned, but here in the flesh,” answered Fred, taking her hand. She let him hold it a moment, her face rosy with blushes and happiness, then drawing it gently away, she said:

“Captain Shackelford, do not misinterpret what I have done for you. You saved my life; I have at least paid a portion of my debt. Our paths are different. To-day I start for my home in Columbia. We may never see each other again.”

“Oh! don’t say that, don’t say that!” cried Fred.

“How did you escape your pursuers?” she asked, without heeding what he had said.

Fred briefly told her.

“The Lord has been kind to you,” she answered. “It is fortunate that your pursuers believe you were drowned. It will give you a chance to escape. But you had better go a little south, then east, before you turn north. You will find the country unguarded that way.

Then she told Fred what had happened, that the feeling not only against her but against her uncle was intense, and that if she were a man, her life would not be safe. "I believe," she continued, "that Major Kenyon is quietly trying to fan this feeling into a blaze."

Fred thought of how he would do all manner of things to Major Kenyon if he should ever happen to meet him.

"Miss de Courtney," he said, "we are famished. Can you have Cato smuggle some food to us?"

She shook her head. "No, it would be too dangerous. Oh! what can I do?"

"Have you any matches?"

Cato was appealed to, and after some fumbling in his pockets, he produced half a dozen matches. Matches at that time were a scarce and precious article in the South.

"Miss de Courtney," said Fred, "you have again saved us. We will not starve as long as green corn holds out."

"It is little to do," she answered. "Captain Shackelford, we must now part; this interview has already lasted too long."

"Hold a moment," said Fred; "let me speak to Cato." Taking the negro to one side, he said:

"You belong to Miss de Courtney, do you not?"

"Yes, massa; bin her groom ebber since she so high," and he held his hand about three feet from the ground.

“It is a precious jewel you are guarding, Cato; be careful of her.”

“Ole Cato die fo’ her,” the negro answered, fervently. The day came when he made good his word, and yielded up his life in defending her honor.

“Miss de Courtney,” said Fred, going to her side, “I believe that God in His mercy will permit us to meet again. I am now nothing but a hunted prisoner, with a price upon my head. Some time it may be different. Only remember I love you.”

She averted her face, but reached forth her hand. Fred caught it and pressed it to his lips again and again. A moment more and she was galloping away. Little did either think under what circumstances their next meeting would be.

Fred and Darling at once changed their location about half a mile, seeking the midst of a dense thicket. Here they dug a hole, kindled a fire, roasted their corn, and made a hearty meal. Fred thoroughly cleaned his revolver and dried his cartridges; then they took turns at watching and sleeping.

They were not molested during the day, and when night came they took up their march full of hope. Following Miss de Courtney’s advice, they went south, then east, following their back tracks, first down, then up the creek, to the Norton plantation. When morning came they were miles away from the scene of their adventures.

It would be tedious to follow our heroes through all their wanderings. The second night they reached

and crossed the Ocmulgee River a little north of Hawkinsville. Danger still lurked on every side, and if it had not been for the aid of friendly negroes they never could have escaped. Once they were attacked by a pack of six dogs, but the ax of Darling and the revolver of Fred made short work of them.

Bearing northeast, they reached the Oconee River. This stream they did not cross, but kept up its western bank. When a few miles from Milledgeville, their negro guide happened to mention that he belonged to a William Wood. They were on the plantation of Joe's master. No sooner did the negro learn that they knew of Joe, than he insisted that he take them to the cabin of Joe's widow, saying that they could rest there during the day, and that it would be perfectly safe; no one would think of looking in Susan's cabin for white men.

This they did, and found a safe refuge. To Susan they were as angels from heaven. Fred found that Miss de Courtney, true to her promise, had written a letter to Joe's master telling him of the death of his slave, and sending his last words to his wife.

From the Wood plantation they shaped their course northwest. For two weeks they hid by day and traveled by night, most of the time under the guidance of some faithful negro, who led them by secret forest paths on their course.

Near the close of September they found them-

selves near Monroeville. They were now in a section of country which was contested ground between the cavalry of both armies. Their hearts were beating high with hope, for in a day or two more they ought to be safe inside of Sherman's lines. They were secreted in a thicket not far from a road, also near to a bubbling spring. Night was drawing near, and they had eaten a frugal meal of corn bread, preparatory to starting, when they were startled by the tramp of horses and the jingling of sabers. A moment more and a squadron of Confederate cavalry came galloping down the road. They halted at the spring and made preparations to encamp. Pickets were thrown out, and Fred and Darling found themselves inside of the Confederate lines.

"Well, this is a pretty go," whispered Darling; "and we so near liberty!"

"Let us be thankful," answered Fred, "that darkness is near. If we are not discovered immediately, we can easily crawl between posts as soon as night comes."

But something happened which entirely changed Fred's plans. The squadron in camp was joined by another squadron, and at the head of the last rode Captain Chambers, mounted on Prince.

The sight of Prince set Fred almost wild. For a moment he lost his head, and if it had not been for the restraining hand of Darling he would have made an attempt to capture the horse then and there.

"Are you crazy?" angrily whispered Darling, as he jerked him down with no gentle hand.

"I reckon I am," whispered Fred, excitedly; "but, Dick, I must have that horse, or die in the attempt."

"Keep cool," answered Darling. "When it gets dark we shall see what can be done. Don't spoil everything in your excitement."

"Dick, I believe I am excited," and with the sleeve of his ragged blouse Fred wiped away the perspiration which had gathered on his forehead; "but thanks to your coolness, I am all right now."

Darkness settled down, but the little camp of the Confederates glowed with camp-fires, around which the soldiers laughed and joked and prepared their evening meal. It seemed an age to Fred before the fires burned low and the hum of the camp subsided. At last the soldiers, one by one, wrapped themselves in their blankets and lay down to rest.

Fred had carefully noted where the horses of the officers were picketed, and his mind was fully made up to attempt to get possession of Prince. Darling entered fully into his plans, and a long whispered consultation was held as to the best method of procedure.

"Dick," said Fred, "if I can once get on Prince's back and you can capture another horse, I believe, in the darkness and confusion, we can ride right through these fellows and get away."

"Wouldn't it be jolly, Captain, if we could gal-

lop into Sherman's camp?" and Darling fairly chuckled at the idea.

"That it would. Let us creep a little closer; the camp seems to be comparatively quiet now."

"I see a few moving around yet," was Darling's reply, "but I reckon we can crawl a little closer without danger."

As noiselessly as two Indians they crept toward the Confederate camp. Nearing a large tree, they heard approaching footsteps. Hugging the ground, they lay holding their breath, being afraid to breathe. But the footsteps halted on the opposite side of the tree, and a voice said:

"Here is a good place to sit down, Chambers, and lean our backs against this tree. Have a smoke?"

"I don't care if I do," was the answer.

There came a sound of scratching matches, a feeble light flickered and flamed for a moment, and then went out.

"Now that our cigars are lighted," continued the officer who spoke first, "tell me that story you promised me. You said it was strange and somewhat romantic."

Captain Chambers smoked a moment in silence, and then answered:

"Lieutenant, the story is both strange and romantic, and as it somewhat touches the honor of the family, I would take it as a kindness that you would receive it as confidential."

"Certainly," was the answer.

“You remember the terrible wound I received on Lookout Mountain, just before the battle of Chickamauga?”

“I think I do; it’s a wonder you are alive.”

“Well, I was after the very horse I now ride; I captured him during the Stoneman raid.”

“Yes; and had a quarrel with Kenyon over the horse. I was mighty glad you got him.”

“The very fellow that shot me I captured with the horse. He was a young fellow, bright as a dollar; said he was a scout, and a private in some Kentucky regiment. I doubted the story, for when he shot me he wore a captain’s uniform; but if he wanted to pose as a private, it was none of my business. You remember he made his horse throw Kenyon.”

“Ha! ha!” laughed the officer; “that was one of the slickest tricks I ever knew. Gad! but didn’t it rile the major, as well as lose him the horse?”

“I think it did. It hurt his pride, and that is the tenderest thing about him. It’s a pity his conscience is not as tender. The major also doubted the story of the fellow’s being a private, and set out to find if his suspicions were correct. The prisoner must have received a tip, or he must be remarkably shrewd, for when the muster-rolls of the prisoners were made out at Athens he gave another name and regiment. But Kenyon followed the scent as keen as a bloodhound, and at last found out who the fellow really was.”

“And who did he prove to be?” eagerly asked the lieutenant.

“No less a personage than Captain Frederic Shackelford, chief of General Sherman’s scouts, and a son of General Richard Shackelford of our army.”

“Captain, you are joking,” cried the lieutenant, in surprise.

“Not a bit. Major Kenyon now had something to work for besides petty revenge. It would be a feather in his cap to expose the deception; it would also go hard with Shackelford, for it can be proven that he has entered our lines several times disguised as a Confederate officer. Kenyon went to Andersonville to bag his game, and to his disgust found that Shackelford had escaped only the night before.”

“He must be a bird, to get out of Andersonville,” exclaimed the lieutenant. “They caught him again, of course?”

“No, they didn’t; and what I now tell you I have learned from letters received from my father, and it is the strangest part of my story. Father resides about fifty miles from Andersonville, and south of Macon, on the Flint River.”

“How about the romance?” put in the lieutenant.

“I am coming to that. I have a cousin, Lucille de Courtney, who resides in Columbia, South Carolina. She is, without exception, the most beauti-

ful girl I ever saw. I was badly smitten with her when a boy, but both our families have a prejudice against cousins marrying, so I gave up my boyish infatuation.

“Then, for some reason I never fully understood, there seemed to be an understanding that when of suitable age she should marry Major Kenyon.”

“What, Kenyon again?” growled the lieutenant. “Confound him, if the girl is as pretty as you say.”

“Wait until I get through. Now it happened that my fair cousin was visiting at my father’s this month; and Major Kenyon, partly to see her and partly to see if he could not get track of Shackelford, whom he suspected of trying to make his way through the neighborhood where my father resides, paid a visit to my home. One morning while Lucille was taking a canter, unaccompanied, her horse ran away, and was about to plunge from an embankment into the river, when this same Shackelford, who was in hiding, shot the horse and rescued her.”

“Lucky fellow!” ejaculated the lieutenant.

“It was a daring deed for him to do, for the whole country was looking for him, and if caught his life would not have been worth a straw. Two days before, he had killed an officer, a popular fellow, who was attempting to arrest him.”

“That’s serious,” remarked the lieutenant.

“I should say so. But my cousin, instead of informing on him, shielded him, and ended up by falling in love with him.”

“I’ll ——!” ejaculated the lieutenant. “What did she do with Kenyon?”

“Sacked him slick and clean.”

“How did the major take that?”

“Got on to the whole thing, and started out with a posse to catch and hang Shackelford. The girl found it out, and she and Kenyon actually had a race to see which would reach Shackelford’s hiding-place first. The girl beat him by a length, warned her lover, and he and a comrade with him plunged into the river and swam across. They were tracked three miles up the river, where their trail struck the stream again, and there all traces of them were lost. It is supposed they attempted to swim back across the stream, and were drowned. You may be sure the affair created a sensation. Father sent Lucille back to Columbia in disgrace. The feeling ran so high that if Lucille had been a man she would have been lynched without ceremony. It took all Major Kenyon’s authority to keep them from burning father’s house after Lucille left. As it is, father is afraid the affair will lose him the judgeship.”

“Chambers, you say this cousin of yours is beautiful?” remarked the lieutenant, throwing away the stub of his cigar.

“Beautiful! she is magnificent.”

“Then as she has sacked Kenyon and Shackelford is dead, what chance will there be—?”

“Hold on, lieutenant. Now comes another queer part of the story. Since her arrival in Colum-

bia, Lucille has written to father that Shackelford was not drowned; that she saw him the day after his supposed death. But father thinks it a subterfuge on her part to get rid of Kenyon, for he still continues to press his suit."

"A plague on both the houses of Kenyon and Shackelford," said the lieutenant, laughing. "If there is ever any chance for me, let me know. But, Captain, to change the subject, what is Hood going to do? He must do something, or the army will disintegrate."

"I have heard it hinted," answered Chambers, "that Hood is on the eve of a movement that will surprise not only Billy Sherman, but the whole country."

"The Lord grant it; but what is it?"

"A raid to the rear; that will make Sherman get back in a hurry."

"Pshaw! Haven't we tried raids time and time again, and what did they amount to? It beats all how quick those blamed Yankees will repair a railroad."

"I don't mean a raid with cavalry, Lieutenant, but one with the whole army. The first thing Sherman knows, he will find Hood with his entire army in the rear. This will force him back. In less than two months I look to see the fighting transferred to Tennessee and Kentucky again."

"Let us hope so. The move is a desperate one, but only desperate measures will save the Confederacy. Now, Chambers, interesting as the con-

versation has been, we had better adjourn it, for we have a long ride before us to-morrow."

The two officers bade each other good night, and each sought his quarters.

Fred had listened to this conversation with amazement. That Lucille de Courtney was a cousin of Captain Chambers, and that it was on the plantation of Chambers's father that he and Darling had hidden was news indeed. But what astonished him the most was the relation that Lucille bore to Kenyon. That they had been almost as good as engaged would have been gall and wormwood to him had it not been for Captain Chambers's declaration that Lucille loved him.

"What do you think of that?" whispered Darling as soon as the officers got well out of hearing.

"I think," answered Fred, "that if Chambers told the truth, I am the happiest man in existence."

"What! to hear that Hood is going to raise particular thunder, and force Sherman to get back?"

"No, no; but to hear that Lucille de Courtney loves me."

Darling nearly exploded in the effort to keep from laughing. He rolled over and over and kicked up his heels to give vent to his feelings. "Say, Captain," he at length managed to say, "love seems to have made you forget the dangers with which we are surrounded, and even to forget Prince."

Darling's words brought Fred down from the seventh heaven. He sighed, and said: "You are

right, Dick; I even forgot Prince. But I will now try to make amends. The horses will be guarded, of course."

"Yes; we may have to kill a sentinel."

"Not that, Dick, if we can help it; we have shed blood enough."

"A stiff tap on the head may be sufficient. I feel a good thick club by my hand now."

"Try it, Dick. Strike to stun, not to kill."

"All right, Captain; but I bet the fellow will have a sore head if I get a good crack at him."

They waited until nearly midnight before they dared to make the attempt. By that time the entire camp was wrapped in slumber, and the fires gave but little light.

"Now," whispered Fred, "remember, a false move may spoil all."

Crawling along foot by foot, they were at last among the horses. The intelligent animals began to be uneasy. The sentinel, who was sleepily leaning on his carbine, straightened up to see what was the cause of the commotion. Then came the sound of a blow, a stifled moan, and the sentinel sank senseless to the ground. The horses began to snort and try to break away.

"Quick, Dick!" cried Fred, as he sprang to the side of Prince. Darling had no choice, so he took the horse next to Prince. There was no time for ceremony. Already two or three voices were crying, "Sentinel, what is the matter with the horses?"

Cutting the lariats, and waiting for neither sad-



FRED AND DARLING VAULTED ON THE BARE BACKS OF THE HORSES, AND WERE OFF.

dle nor bridle, Fred and Darling vaulted on the bare backs of the horses, and were off.

“Halt! halt!” shouted a dozen voices. And then came scattering shots, followed by a straggling volley.

Bending low over their horses' necks, they let the balls fly harmlessly over them. The whole camp was in an uproar. Shouts, oaths, hoarse commands, horses broken loose running wildly through the camp, the sharp reports of firearms, all commingled to make the stampede more general.

The pickets heard the noise, and before Fred and Darling reached them were drawn up across the road ready to receive what was to come.

“Halt! halt! What's the matter?” they called, as Fred and Darling thundered down on them.

Without checking their speed, they cried: “Fly! fly! The camp is being raided by a whole brigade of Yankee cavalry.”

Without a word, the whole post joined with Fred and Darling in their headlong flight.

“This is too much of a good thing,” thought Fred. “How to get rid of these fellows is now the question.”

The dim outlines of a cross-road suddenly appeared. “Right wheel!” shouted Fred. The Confederates wheeled to the right, but Fred and Darling kept straight on, and before the Confederates realized what had happened, they were swallowed up in the darkness.

“Whar be them fellows who said the camp was

raided?" suddenly asked one of the Confederates. No one could tell. The Confederates halted, listened, then with curses wheeled their horses and slowly rode back. It was quite an hour before order was fully established in the Confederate camp, and they hardly knew what had happened, only that a sentinel had been struck down and the horses stampeded.

When they became confident that they were not being pursued, Fred and Darling checked their headlong speed.

"This is awful," groaned Darling, riding without a saddle.

"Awful or not, you will have to stand it. There is no halt for us until we reach the Federal lines. Come, Prince," and he struck into a canter.

"Oh, Captain, hold on," groaned poor Darling; "this horse isn't thicker than a case-knife."

"Grin and bear it, my boy, grin and bear it"; and Fred kept up his swinging gate.

Just as the morning was breaking they were halted by the Federal outpost near Decatur. Once in the Federal lines, Fred and Darling shook hands, danced, and shouted until the soldiers thought them crazy. They were nearly so with joy.

"I reckon," remarked Darling, as after a hearty breakfast they mounted their horses, now saddled and bridled, for their ride into Atlanta, "Uncle Billy will be rather surprised to see us."

"I reckon he will," answered Fred.

And he was.

CHAPTER XXII.

“SEE! SEE! THERE IS ATLANTA.”

IT was about nine o'clock in the morning when Fred and Darling came in sight of the city of Atlanta. They reined in their horses and gazed long and earnestly. The city lay spread out before them, smiling in the morning sun. Cannon no longer thundered; the din of contending armies was no longer heard.

“See! see!” cried Fred; “there is Atlanta—Atlanta, for which we contended for four long months; Atlanta, for which so many thousands yielded up their lives.”

He looked around. They were on the battleground of July 22d. Over there the gallant McPherson fell. Through the slumbering forest he could see the outlines of Leggett's hill. The trees on its summit were nodding peacefully in the morning breeze. Could that be the place where such dreadful scenes were enacted? Was he in that hell of fire that day? He could not realize it. It all seemed a horrible dream. Long he gazed, and then slowly they rode into the captured city.

General Sherman sat on the veranda of his headquarters, enjoying a cigar and discussing the mili-

tary situation with the members of his staff. It was nearly a month since Atlanta had fallen, and the army had been taking a much needed rest. During this time General Hood had remained quiet, with headquarters at Palmetto; but for the last day or two he had been showing signs of activity, and the question being discussed was, What will he do?



GENERAL HOOD.

During his brief rest General Sherman was thinking out a mighty problem. Atlanta was his, and "fairly won," but the Confederate army still confronted him. What he would do depended in a large measure on what General Hood would do. The Confederate president, Jefferson Davis, had visited the army, and tried to fire the drooping spirits of the men with his eloquence. He told the soldiers that their feet would soon be pressing the soil of Tennessee and Kentucky, that Sherman's army was in dire extremity, and would be obliged to fall back.

All this led General Sherman to believe that Hood would make a desperate effort to draw him back from Atlanta. But where would the blow fall? That was the question Sherman was discussing with his staff.

The consensus of opinion seemed to be that Hood would move into Alabama, and from there attempt the invasion of Tennessee.

"If he does—" said General Sherman, but he stopped. The idea of a march to the sea was as yet but dimly fixed in his mind, but at that moment what he would do came as a flash of inspiration; so he did not finish what he was going to say, but added, "If he does, he will be sorry for it."

Just then one of the officers interrupted by exclaiming: "What have we here? Ambassadors from his Majesty the King of the Ragamuffins?"

All looked up. Fred and Darling had just dismounted, leaving their horses in the care of two grinning orderlies, who mockingly saluted them as they slowly limped toward the group on the veranda.

The general gave one look, first at the men, then at the horses. "If I am not mistaken," he said, in a surprised tone, "one of those horses is the one that Captain Shackelford rode, and those fellows look like escaped prisoners. Is it possible we are going to get some news of the captain?"

By this time Fred and Darling had come up, and gravely saluting, stood at attention.

"Captain Shackelford, as I live!" cried the general; and forgetting his military dignity, he sprang forward to grasp Fred and then Darling by the hand. "Is it possible you have been prisoners, and escaped?"

"Not only possible, but an actual fact, General."

"Then those rascally Confederates lied to me. When I effected an exchange of prisoners with Hood, the first officer I asked to be exchanged was you. But they declared they had not, and never

had, a Captain Shackelford as a prisoner. So I gave you up as dead."

"Alive, General, but somewhat dilapidated. Oh, for a bath, a shave, a haircut, a decent uniform!"

"You shall have them all before I ask you a single question," promptly replied the general.

As they limped away, Darling turned to one of the staff, and said: "Excuse me, Doctor, but will you be so kind as to send around a box of cooling ointment to the bathroom?"

"Certainly," said the surgeon, as the faint semblance of a smile played around the corners of his mouth.

A couple of hours afterwards, clad in neat uniforms, shaved and trimmed, they presented themselves before General Sherman.

"Now you look like yourselves," said the general. "Although I am anxious to hear your story, we will have some dinner first; but I must say you do not look starved, like most of the prisoners who have returned."

"That may be accounted for, General, from the fact that we have been living off the country for the last month."

"Ah! no danger of your starving, then," replied the general, with a merry twinkle in his eye.

After dinner General Sherman, his whole staff, and a number of the other officers who had gathered listened to Fred's story. In as few words as possible Fred related what had befallen himself and

Darling from the time they started on the raid with Stoneman. And somehow he managed to tell the story without saying a word of Lucille de Courtney.

"When he had finished, the younger members of the staff gathered around him and congratulated him on his escape, while some of them laughingly declared that if they didn't know he was the soul of truth, they would be inclined to doubt his story.

But to General Sherman, Fred's story meant much more than his officers surmised. He carefully questioned him about the country through which he had traveled, the condition of the roads, its resources, its crops, its capability of supporting an army, and he seemed to be well pleased with the answers.

"Your capture may prove to be not an unmixed evil," he remarked, after Fred was through.

Fred had no idea what he meant at the time, but afterwards he knew.

"Where is Hood now?" asked Fred.

"At Palmetto; but he seems to be getting a little restless. I have the hardest kind of work to get any reliable information. Captain, I have missed you, especially at Jonesboro, where I could have destroyed Hardee's corps, if I only had received my information a little earlier."

"What do you think, General, of that conversation I overheard between Captain Chambers and the lieutenant? Do you believe General Hood actually

contemplates throwing his whole army squarely in your rear?"

"It would be a daring move for Hood to make, and a fatal one if I should hear of it in time. We can only wait and see. Captain," he continued, "you will find your scouts somewhat scattered, and not as efficient as they were, although Sergeant Craig has been doing pretty well. He is absent now on the right, watching Hood."

"Then Craig escaped?" exclaimed Fred, joyfully.

"Yes, he and Owens. Now, Captain, I think it best for you and Lieutenant Darling to take a little rest. Therefore I give each of you a ten days' leave of absence. Make the best of it, for by that time the merry game of war may commence again."

Thanking him, Fred at once prepared to enjoy his ten days. The first thing that he did was to hunt up Captain Hugh Raymond. The fellow went wild when he saw Fred. After nearly shaking his hand off and fairly hugging him, he exclaimed: "Captain, I am a staff officer now, and must maintain some dignity, or I would turn at least half a dozen somersaults. I gave you up for dead long ago. And there is Prince! How in the world did you manage to get back with him?"

So Fred had to tell his story all over again, and this time he did not leave out Lucille de Courtney. When he had finished, Hugh cried: "Captain

Shackelford, if you don't marry that girl you are no friend of mine. I wish Kate would take half as much interest in me as Miss de Courtney did in you. How did Kate look when you saw her in Macon?"

"As beautiful as ever. The officer in command of the prison barracks seemed very much interested in her."

Hugh's face lengthened. "Blast him!" he exclaimed. "I should like to get hold of him. Did she say anything about me?"

"Yes, she asked about you."

"That is a good deal for her. Captain, I will get that fair cousin of yours yet."

"Don't flatter yourself, Captain Raymond."

"It's all right, anyway; I am not one of the heartbreaking kind. Hugh Raymond is bound to be happy whether or no. But, Captain, I actually sniveled, blubbered like a schoolgirl, when I heard you were killed."

"Hugh, did you do that? God bless you, old fellow! I will remember that."

"Oh! I was ashamed of myself a moment afterwards. But I have some instructions to carry to one of our brigades now; so good-bye until I see you again"; and mounting his horse, the light-hearted fellow galloped away, whistling a merry tune.

Fred's next step was to hunt up Colonel Ainsworth. Finding his regiment, Fred inquired for the colonel.

“Ainsworth is colonel no longer,” was the answer. “He won his star at Jonesboro. It was his regiment that first broke the rebel line in that glorious charge, capturing a battery, and making it possible to take General Govan and his entire brigade prisoners.”

“I rejoice to hear of his advancement,” said Fred; “no one deserves it more.”

He lost no time in hunting the general up. The greeting that Fred received from Ainsworth was as sincere, if not as enthusiastic, as the one he had received from Hugh.

After congratulations were over, Fred said, “General, tell me all that has happened since I was taken prisoner.

“There is not much to tell,” answered the general. “After the big battle on the night of the 28th of July, we pounded away for a month without any apparent success. Then came the movement in the rear of Atlanta, a movement which none but a military genius like Sherman could have conceived and carried out. It culminated in the battle of Jonesboro and the fall of Atlanta. It’s a pity that Hardee’s corps was not captured, and Hood’s army entirely ruined, but it was grand as it was. I consider the campaign, with the exception of the Vicksburg campaign, one of the most brilliant and successful of the war. The remarkable feature of it is that General Sherman has so maneuvered that he has inflicted a heavier loss on the enemy than he himself has suffered. It is wonderful—

wonderful—and in marked contrast with the campaign in Virginia, if all reports are true."*

"It has certainly been a glorious campaign," said Fred. "I found the whole country in a panic over the fall of Atlanta. Many are boldly predicting the fall of the Confederacy."

"Captain," suddenly remarked Ainsworth, "do you know that Mabel Vaughn and your cousin Kate Shackelford are in Atlanta?"

"What!" exclaimed Fred in surprise.

"Yes; Miss Vaughn is here superintending the removal of a train-load of sick and wounded soldiers. Your cousin, it seems, had been south to attend on her father, who was wounded."

"Yes, I know," said Fred; "I met her in Macon."

"You did? Well, when General Sherman ordered all citizens out of Atlanta, she came through the lines to get to her home. But the poor girl had

*General Sherman in his "Memoirs" gives his entire loss in the Atlanta Campaign as 31,687. Most histories give it at this figure. But the "Official Records of the Rebellion" show that his loss was 37,081. Thus Sherman lost at least one-third of his army, to say nothing of those sent back sick.

The Confederate loss is harder to arrive at. Surgeon-General Foard gives a loss of 22,520 killed and wounded exclusive of the cavalry and the Georgia State troops. To this add the number of prisoners taken by Sherman's army, viz: 12,982, and we have the total loss of the Confederates as 35,502, exclusive of the cavalry and the Georgia State troops.

But Surgeon-General Foard's figures are known to be signally incorrect. General Hood proves pretty conclusively that from all causes General J. E. Johnston lost nearly 25,000 men up to the time he yielded up the command. Foard claims that Hood, in all of his battles before Atlanta and Jonesboro, lost in killed alone 1,800 men. The Federal army buried and delivered to the enemy under a flag of truce more than double that number of Confederate dead. There is no doubt that the Confederate army while under Hood lost from all causes at least 25,000 men, making the Confederate losses in the campaign from 45,000 to 50,000. General Hardee says that his corps alone, while under Hood, lost between 7,000 and 8,000. Sherman's army during the 120 days which the campaign lasted fired about 170,000 cannon-shots, or on an average one shot each minute for the 120 days. In the same time the army fired 20,000,000 rounds of rifle cartridges, or an average of 110 for each minute of time. There were nearly as many horses and mules killed, disabled, and captured as men. These figures show the awful destructiveness of war.

a hard time of it. Captain Raymond happened to see her crowded into a cattle-car with a lot of refugees. For some reason he did not wish to make himself known, so he told me, and he asked me to tell Mabel Vaughn, without mentioning his name. I did so. Miss Vaughn at once befriended her. They will go North in a day or two."

"General, what you have told me surprises me. I wonder why Hugh said nothing about it. I must see them at once."

Fred lost no time in hunting up Mabel Vaughn. Time had only strengthened their brotherly and sisterly affection for each other.*

"Oh! Fred, Fred!" she cried, the first joyful surprise over, "I would not, could not, have you dead. When Kate told me you had been drowned, I could not believe it, and now here you are alive and well. Oh! how glad I am to see you! Who told you I was here?"

"General Ainsworth, Mabel. "He is climbing, isn't he. He is a grand man."

A blush mantled her cheek as she replied, "I honor him very much."

"Is that all, Mabel?"

"I—think—that's—all," she replied, slowly. "Sometimes I don't know."

"I trust the time will come when you will think differently. Mabel, I have something to tell you."

Then he told her all about Lucille de Courtney.

*See "General Nelson's Scout," and "On General Thomas's Staff."

She listened with glistening eyes. When he was through, she cried, "I know she must be a blessed girl, and worthy of you."

"But, Mabel," said Fred, dejectedly, "I may never see her again."

"Oh, but you will, I know you will! Fred, have you seen Kate yet?"

"No; I hear you befriended her, Mabel. I must thank you."

"Poor Kate! I found her nearly crazy with her surroundings. It was fortunate General Ainsworth saw her."

"It was not the general, but Captain Raymond, who first saw her. He spoke to the general about it, and asked him to speak to you."

"You surprise me. Why has Captain Raymond wished to keep in the background?"

"I think I can tell," said Fred. "He does not want Kate to know she is under any obligations to him. The fact is, he worships Kate, but her hatred of Yankees is so great she will not have anything to do with him. Hugh is independent; he will not force his attentions on her."

"It may come out all right," replied Mabel, "but never while the war lasts. Kate would sooner die than marry any one fighting the South. But let us go and see her; she will receive you as one from the dead."

They found her in the quarters provided for her by Mabel. When she saw Fred, she gave a shriek, and they thought she was going to faint.

Then giving a joyful cry, she was in his arms, crying and sobbing. She at length found her voice. "Oh, Fred! Fred! we have all mourned you as dead. Fred, you don't know the sorrow you have caused your father."

"My father? Does he know I was a prisoner? Kate, I thought you promised me not to tell him."

"But the time came when it was my duty to tell"; and Kate told him all that had happened—how he had been pursued by Major Kenyon, how Calhoun and she tried to save him, and that he escaped the vengeance of Kenyon only by getting out of Andersonville when he did.

"Your father," continued Kate, "at once caused a strict but secret inquiry to be made of what had become of you, and the report that you had perished in the Flint River nearly killed him; but he raised his eyes to heaven and said, 'Thank God!'"

"Kate! Kate! Father did not say that; he could not."

"Yes, he did; and so did I, and so did every one who loved you."

Fred could only look at her in amazement.

"Fred, don't you understand? After that dreadful act, the killing of the officer of the State troops, there would have been no mercy shown; you would have been strung up like a dog, if captured. Was it not better for us to know that you had perished in the river than to know you had met a felon's death?"

"Forgive me, Kate," said Fred, in a trembling

voice; "I did not understand. Yes, it would have been better a thousand times to perish in the river than to fall into the hands of my pursuers."

"Oh, Fred, the agony you have caused us all! Your father has grown ten years older in the last month. First came the fall of Atlanta, then the news of your death."

"Poor father! how I wish I could see him!"

"Why do you cause him all this agony?" cried Kate, with flashing eyes. "Why consort with the enemies of the South? I know how much you have done for me, for us all; how pleasant you have made it for mother in Nashville; but, oh! I hate the Yankees, and I loathe that beast of a Sherman. Fred, do you know that since the fall of Atlanta I have seen so much misery, so many tears shed, that I am almost beside myself? You have heard how that brute of a Sherman expelled the entire population of Atlanta. Oh! it was cruel, cruel!"

"Better that than let them starve," said Fred.

"I will not hear you," she cried. "You do not know the suffering the order caused. When father heard of the order he thought it would be a good time for me to get back to Nashville with the refugees, so I came to Atlanta. I was crowded in a dirty freight-car with weeping women and children—with women with babes at the breast, with women sick unto death. Here I was seen by Mabel Vaughn. She was a ministering spirit to those poor women; she made their condition as

comfortable as possible. Fred, that girl is an angel."

"I know it," said Fred.

"Fred, you ought to marry her. I have often wondered why you and Mabel do not love each other."

"We do, Kate, as brother and sister. But it was not Mabel Vaughn who first discovered you; it was Captain Hugh Raymond."

"What!" cried Kate, with open eyes.

"It was Captain Raymond who first saw you, and informed General Ainsworth, and had him tell Mabel Vaughn."

"Why did he do this? Why didn't he make himself known?"

"I do not know, Kate, for a certainty, but I believe he did not want you to feel under any obligations to him. In other words, he does not wish to seem to be forcing his attentions on you. Yet, Kate, he loves you, and you know it."

With the rich blood leaping in her face, she cried: "Who told you this? Did Captain Raymond?"

"No; he did not even tell me you were in the city. I am indebted to General Ainsworth for the information."

"Why do you tell me this?" she said, with quivering lip. You know Hugh Raymond can never be anything to me. I would rather die than marry an enemy of the South."

"The day may come when there will be no ene-

ries of the South, when the country will all be one again."

"No, no; the South will be victorious. She cannot be conquered. Don't think because you have Atlanta that the war is over. Before many weeks Sherman's army will be starving, and Hood's cannon will be thundering before Nashville. See if it isn't so."

"All right, Kate; I will try to get there before him. I have a ten days' leave of absence, and I think I will take you home to see Aunt Jennie. What do you say, Kate?"

"Oh! will you, Fred?" she cried, clapping her hands. "That will be jolly."

"Well, be ready to-morrow. You don't want to see Captain Raymond before you go, do you, and thank him for his kindness?"

"Oh, no, no! Fred, you are cruel."

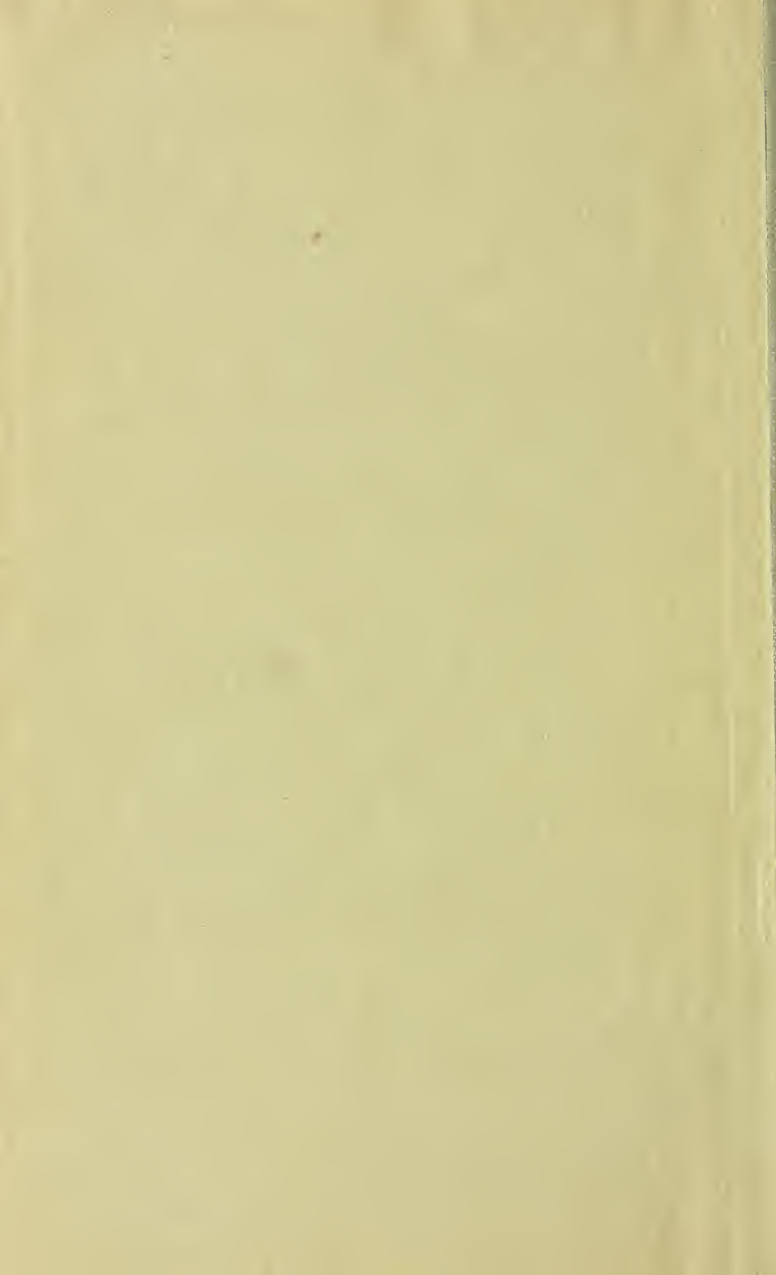
"I was only joking. Be ready to-morrow, Kate."

After Fred had gone, Kate Shackelford had another fight with her heart; and once more she thought that she had gained the victory, and that Hugh Raymond was nothing to her.

The next day Fred started with Kate for Nashville. To him the trip to Chattanooga was full of interest. Every landmark wore a familiar look. Almost every foot of ground had been fought over. There was Kenesaw. From its summit waved the stars and stripes. Fred's heart was full of hope. He believed that the end of the war was near, that

it was virtually over. Little did he think that even before he reached Chattanooga he would be called back to duty. Yet in less than three days he aided in the gallant defense of Allatoona.

Afterwards he contributed to the success of that historic march from Atlanta to the sea, and from the sea to Washington, there to take part in that grand parade which proclaimed the war over and the Union preserved.



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